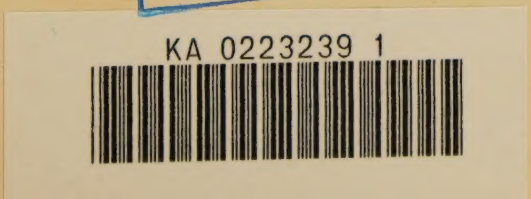
KING ALFRED'S
COLLEGE

Martial Rose Library

From the Library
of John Carswell

WITHDRAWN FROM
THE LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF
WINCHESTER



LETTERS OF

HORACE WALPOLE

MRS. PAGET TOYNBEE

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH
NEW YORK AND TORONTO

Mary Berry
from a miniature by Mrs. Mee.

Walker & Cockerell Ph. Sc.

THE LETTERS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE

FOURTH EARL OF ORFORD

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED

AND EDITED WITH NOTES AND INDICES

BY

MRS. PAGET TOYNBEE

IN SIXTEEN VOLUMES

WITH PORTRAITS AND FACSIMILES

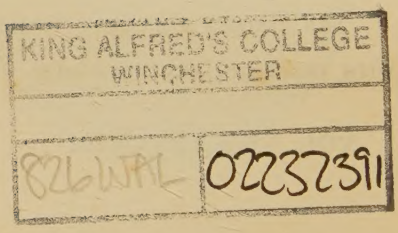
VOL. XIV: 1787—1791

OXFORD

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

MCMV

OXFORD
PRINTED AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
BY HORACE HART, M.A.
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY



CONTENTS OF VOL. XIV

	PAGES
List of Portraits	vi
List of Letters in Volume XIV	vii–xii
Letters 2612–2801	1–448

LIST OF PORTRAITS

MISS MARY BERRY . . . . . *Frontispiece*
From a miniature by Mrs. Mee *in possession of* Earl Waldegrave

COLONEL ISAAC BARRÉ . . . . . *To face p.* 39
From a painting by Gilbert Stuart *in* National Portrait Gallery.

FACSIMILE OF LETTER TO MRS. DICKENSON . „ 284
In possession of Sir W. R. Anson, Bart., M.P., Warden of All Souls College, Oxford.

SIR HENRY CHARLES ENGLEFIELD, SEVENTH BARONET . . . . . „ 297
From a drawing by George Dance *in* National Portrait Gallery.

WARREN HASTINGS . . . . . „ 347
From a painting by Tilly Kettle *in* National Portrait Gallery.

LIST OF LETTERS IN VOL. XIV

T			C
		1787.	
2612	June 14, 1787	Countess of Upper Ossory	2417
2613	June 15, 1787	Miss Hannah More	2418
2614	June 17, 1787	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	2419
2615	June 28, 1787	Countess of Upper Ossory	2420
2616†	July 26, 1787	Hon. Mrs. Boyle-Walsingham.	
2617	July 28, 1787	Earl of Strafford	2421
2618	Aug. 29, 1787	John Pinkerton	2422
2619	Sept. 1, 1787	Earl Harcourt	2423
2620	Sept. 6, 1787	Countess of Upper Ossory	2425
2621	Sept. 15, 1787	Countess of Upper Ossory	2426
2622	Oct. 4, 1787	Countess of Upper Ossory	2427
2623	Oct. 14, 1787	Miss Hannah More	2428
2624	Oct. 28, 1787	Lady Lyttelton	2429
2625	Nov. 11, 1787	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	2430
2626	Dec. 3, 1787	Countess of Upper Ossory	2431
2627	Dec. 9, 1787	Hon. Thomas Walpole.	
2628	Dec. 15, 1787	Countess of Upper Ossory	2432
		1788.	
2629	Jan. 15, 1788	Countess of Upper Ossory	2433
2630	Feb. 11, 1788	John Pinkerton.	
2631	Feb. 14, 1788	Countess of Upper Ossory	2434
2632	April 13, 1788	Mrs. Dickenson.	
2633	May 8, 1788	Richard Gough.	
2634	June 5, 1788	Thomas Barrett	2435
2635	June 17, 1788	Earl of Strafford	2436
2636	July 4, 1788	Miss Hannah More	2437
2637	July 9, 1788	Countess of Upper Ossory	2438
2638	July 12, 1788	Miss Hannah More	2439
2639†	July 13, 1788	Viscount Beauchamp.	
2640	July 21, 1788	Thomas Walpole the Younger.	
2641	July 22, 1788	Countess of Upper Ossory	2440
2642	July 29, 1788	Thomas Astle.	
2643	Aug. 2, 1788	Earl of Strafford	2441

† Now printed for the first time.

T			C
2644	Aug. 14, 1788.	John Pinkerton	2442
2645	Aug. 16, 1788.	Countess of Upper Ossory	2443
2646	Aug. 17, 1788.	Miss Hannah More	2444
2647	Sept. 6, 1788	Countess of Upper Ossory	2445
2648	Sept. 12, 1788.	Earl of Strafford	2446
2649	Sept. 22, 1788.	Miss Hannah More	2447
2650	Sept. 24, 1788.	Countess of Upper Ossory	2448
2651	Oct. 11, 1788	Countess of Upper Ossory	2449
2652†	Oct. 14, 1788	Miss Mary Berry.	
2653	Oct. 15, 1788	John Pinkerton	2450
2654	Oct. 19, 1788	Countess of Upper Ossory	2451
2655	Nov. 28, 1788.	Thomas Holcroft	2452
2656	Dec. 3, 1788	Countess of Upper Ossory	2453
2657	Dec. 11, 1788.	Lady Craven	2454
2658	Dec. 26, 1788.	Countess of Upper Ossory	2455
		1789.	
2659	Feb. 2, 17—and 71	Miss Mary Berry	2456
2660	Feb. 6, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2457
2661	Feb. 10, 1789.	Countess of Upper Ossory	2458
2662	Feb. 12, 1789.	Sir Horace Mann the Younger	2459
2663	Feb. 24, 1789.	Countess of Upper Ossory	2460
2664	Feb. 28, 1789.	Countess of Upper Ossory	2461
2665†	March 11, 1789	Earl of Charlemont.	
2666	March 20, 1789	Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.	2463
2667	March 25, 1789	Miss Mary Berry.	
2668	April 14, 1789	Miss Mary Berry.	
2669	April 22, 1789	Miss Hannah More	2464
2670	April 28, at night, 1789	Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.	2465
2671†	May 15, 1789.	Sir John Fenn.	
2672†	[May 16, 1789]	Sir John Fenn.	
2673†	May 27, 1789.	Sir John Fenn.	
2674	May 28, 1789.	Richard Gough.	
2675†	June 1, 1789	Sir John Fenn.	
2676	June 13, 1789.	Mrs. Elizabeth Carter	2466
2677.		Countess of Upper Ossory	Part of 1692
2678	Monday evening	Countess of Upper Ossory	2462
2679	June 23, 1789.	Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.	2467

† Now printed for the first time.

T			C
2680	June 23, 1789	Miss Hannah More	2468
2681†	June 27, 1789	Richard Gough.	
2682	June 30, 1789	Miss Mary Berry	2469
2683	July 1, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2470
2684	July 2, 1789	Miss Hannah More	2471
2685	July 9, 1789	Miss Mary Berry	2472
2686	July 10, 1789	Miss Hannah More	2473
2687	July 10, 1789	Miss Mary Berry.	
2688	[July 15, 1789]	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	2474
2689	July 16, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2475
2690	July 19, 1789	Miss Mary Berry.	
2691	July 20, 1789	Miss Hannah More	2476
2692	July 22, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2477
2693	July 25, 1789	Mrs. Elizabeth Carter	2478
2694	July 29, 1789	Miss Mary Berry	2479
2695	July 31, 1789	John Pinkerton	2480
2696	Aug. 4, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2481
2697†	Aug. 5, 1789	Joseph Cooper Walker.	
2698	Aug. 6, 1789	Miss Mary Berry.	
2699	Aug. 9, 1789	Miss Hannah More	2482
2700	Aug. 13, 1789	Miss Mary Berry.	
2701	Aug. 14, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2483
2702	Aug. 14, 1789	John Pinkerton	2484
2703	Aug. 19, 1789	John Pinkerton	2485
2704	Aug. 20, 1789	Miss Mary Berry.	
2705	Aug. 23, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2486
2706	Aug. 24, 1789	Richard Gough	2487
2707	Aug. 27, 1789	Miss Mary Berry	2488
2708	Sept. 4, 1789	Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry	2489
2709	Sept. 5, 1789	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	2490
2710	Sept. 1789	Miss Hannah More	2491
2711	Sept. 13, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2492
2712	Sept. 18, 1789	Miss Mary Berry.	
2713	Sept. 26, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2493
2714	Sept. 30, 1789	Miss Mary Berry.	
2715	Oct. 9, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2494
2716	Oct. 29, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2495
2717	Nov. 4, 1789	Miss Hannah More	2496
2718	Nov. 8, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2497
2719	Nov. 26, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2498
2720	Dec. 6, 1789	Countess of Upper Ossory	2499

† Now printed for the first time.

T			C
2721	Dec. 12, 1789 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	2500
2722	Dec. 15, 1789 . . .	John Pinkerton	2501
2723	Dec. 26, 1789 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	2502
2724	Dec. 30, 1789 . . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	2503
		1790.	
2725†	Jan. 30, 1790 . . .	Thomas Astle.	
2726	Feb. 20, 1790 . . .	Miss Hannah More . . .	2504
2727†	March 11	Miss Hannah More.	
2728	April 9, 1790 . . .	Hon. Thomas Walpole.	
2729	April 10, 1790 . .	Earl of Carlisle.	
2730†	April 30, 1790 . .		
2731	May 17, 1790 . . .	Richard Gough.	
2732	May 26, 1790 . . .	John Pinkerton.	
2733	June 25, 1790 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	2505
2734	June 26, 1790 . . .	Earl of Strafford . . .	2506
2735	July 1, 1790 . . .	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	2507
2736	July 2, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry.	
2737	July 3, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry . . .	2508
2738	July 10, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry.	
2739	July 17, Saturday, 1790	Miss Mary Berry.	
2740	July 23, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry.	
2741	July 25, 1790 . . .	Miss Hannah More.	
2742	July 29, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry.	
2743	Aug. 2, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry.	
2744	Aug. 9, at night [1790]	Hon. Henry Seymour Conway	2509
2745	Aug. 12, 1790. . .	Earl of Strafford . . .	2510
2746†	Aug. 25, 1790. . .	Mrs. Dickenson.	
2747	Aug. 30, 1790. . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	2511
2748	Sept. 11, 1790 . .	Miss Hannah More.	
2749	Sept. 21, 1790 . .	Lord Hailes.	2512
2750	Oct. 10, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry . . .	2513
2751	Oct. 12, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry.	
2752	Oct. 16, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry.	
2753	Oct. 22, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry.	
2754	Oct. 31, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry . . .	2514
2755	Oct. 1790 . . .	Miss Burney.	
2755*	Nov. 3, 1790 . . .	Miss Burney.	
2755**	Nov. 3, at night, 1790	Miss Burney.	
2756	Nov. 8, 1790 . . .	Miss Mary Berry . . .	2515 2516

† Now printed for the first time.

T			C
2757	Nov. 13, 1790	Miss Mary Berry.	
2758	Nov. 18, 1790	Miss Mary Berry	2517
2759	Nov. 27, 1790	Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry	2518
2760	Dec. 1, 1790	Countess of Upper Ossory	2520
2761	Dec. 9, 1790	Countess of Upper Ossory	2521
2762	Dec. 10, 1790	Miss Mary Berry.	
2763	Dec. 16, 1790	Miss Mary Berry.	
2764	Dec. 17, 1790	Miss Mary Berry.	
2765	Dec. 20, 1790	Miss Mary Berry	2522
2766†	Dec. 21, 1790	Joseph Cooper Walker.	
2767	Dec. 23, 1790	Robert Berry.	

1791.

2768	Jan. 2, 1791	Miss Mary Berry.	
2769	Jan. 6, 1791	Countess of Upper Ossory	2523
2770	Jan. 9, 1791	Miss Mary Berry.	
2771	Jan. 15, 1791	Miss Mary Berry.	
2772	Jan. 20, 1791	Countess of Upper Ossory	2524
2773	Jan. 22, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2525
2774	Jan. 28, 1791	Countess of Upper Ossory	2526
2775	Jan. 29, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2527
2776	Feb. 4, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2528
2777	Feb. 12, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2529
2778	Feb. 13, 1791	Miss Agnes Berry	2530
2779	Feb. 17, 1791	Earl of Charlemont	2531
2780	Feb. 18, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2532
2781	Feb. 26, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2533
2782†	Feb. 26, 1791	Countess of Charlemont.	
2783	March 5, 1791	Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry	2534
2784	March 11, 1791	Miss Mary Berry.	
2785	March 19, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2535
2786	March 27, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2536
2787	March 31, 1791	Miss Mary Berry.	
2788	April 3, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2537
2789†	April 4, 1791	Joseph Cooper Walker.	
2790†	April 7, 1791	Earl of Buchan.	
2791	April 10, 1791	Miss Mary Berry.	
2792	April 15, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2538
2793	April 23, 1791	Miss Mary Berry	2539

† Now printed for the first time.

T			C
2794	April 25, 1791 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	2540
2795	April 30, 1791 . .	Countess of Upper Ossory .	2541
2796	May 4, 1791 . . .	Miss Mary Berry.	
2797	May 12, 1791 . . .	Miss Mary Berry . . .	2542
2798	May 19, 1791 . . .	Miss Mary Berry . . .	2543
2799	May 26, 1791 . . .	Miss Mary Berry . . .	2544
2800	June 2, 1791 . . .	Miss Mary Berry . . .	2545
2801	June 8, 1791 . . .	Miss Mary Berry . . .	2546

THE LETTERS

OF

HORACE WALPOLE

2612. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, June 14, 1787.

Though your Ladyship *gave me law* (a very proper synonym for delay), I should have answered your letter incontinently, but I have had what is called a *blight* in one of my eyes, and for some days was forced to lie fallow, neither reading nor writing a line; which is a little uncomfortable when quite alone. I do begin to creep about my house, but have not recovered my feet enough to compass the whole circuit of my garden. Monday last was pleasant, and Tuesday very warm; but we are relapsed into our east windhood, which has reigned ever since I have been here for this *green winter*, which, I presume, is the highest title due to this season, which in southern climes is positive *summer*, a name imported by our travellers, with grapes, peaches, and tuberoses; but, as we cannot build hothouses for our whole latitude, our summers seldom come to maturity. However, most of my senses have enjoyed themselves—my sight with verdure, my smell by millions of honeysuckles, my hearing by nightingales, and my feeling with good fires: tolerable luxury for an old cavalier in the north of Europe! Semiramis of Russia is not of my taste, or she would not travel half round the arctic circle; unless she means to conquer the Turks, and transfer the seat of

her empire to Constantinople, like its founder. The ghost of Irene [1] will be mighty glad to see her there, though a little surprised that the Grand Duke, her son, is still alive. I hear she has carried her grandchildren with her as hostages, or she might be dethroned, and not hear of it for three months.

The Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch, they say, came through Holland, and going to visit a chief burgher, found cannon planted before his door, and did not stay to leave a card [2]. How Lord George Gordon must long to be there and burn a street or two!

Most of Mr. Cunningham's anecdotes, to be sure, are not new at present, Madam, but they would have been so twenty years ago, and at least confirm much of what has come out recently. Some, I doubt, have been castrated; indeed, I have heard so—nay, am sure; for in one paragraph a siege or town is mentioned, and refers to the preceding paragraph, in which not a syllable of it is said: clumsy enough.

I am very far from tired, Madam, of encomiums on the performance at Richmond House [3], but I by no means agree with the criticism on it that you quote, and which, I conclude, was written by some player from envy. Who should act genteel comedy perfectly, but people of fashion that have sense? Actors and actresses can only guess at the tone of high life, and can*not* be inspired with it. Why are there so few genteel comedies, but because most comedies are written by men not of that sphere? Etherege, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Cibber wrote genteel comedy, because they lived in the best company; and Mrs. Oldfield played it so well, because she not only followed, but often set, the

LETTER 2612. — [1] Irene, Empress of Constantinople, who in 797 caused the eyes of her son Constantine to be put out.

[2] Holland was in a state of tumult, owing to the endeavours of the so-called patriotic party to depose the Stadtholder, and to declare his office not hereditary in the house of Orange.

[3] Murphy's comedy *The Way to Keep Him* was performed at Richmond House by amateurs on April 20, 1787.

fashion. General Burgoyne has written the best modern comedy for the same reason; and Miss Farren is as excellent as Mrs. Oldfield, because she has lived with the best style of men in England: whereas Mrs. Abington can never go beyond Lady Teazle, which is a second-rate character, and that rank of women are always aping women of fashion, without arriving at the style. Farquhar's plays talk the language of a marching regiment in country quarters; Wycherley, Dryden, Mrs. Centlivre, &c., wrote as if they had only lived in the Rose Tavern; but then the court lived in Drury Lane too, and Lady Dorchester and Nell Gwyn were equally good company. The Richmond Theatre, I imagine, will take root. I supped with the Duke at Mrs. Damer's the night before I left London, and they were talking of improvements on the *local*, as the French would say.

Apropos, Mrs. Damer has given me her eagle[4], which I call *the spoilt child* of my antique one, it is in such a passion. I hope your Ladyship will approve of the motto I design for it. Do you remember the statue at Milan, with this legend:—

Non me Praxiteles, sed Marcus finxit Agrati?

Mine is to be this pentameter:—

Non me Praxiteles finxit, at Anna Damer.

I left Lady Waldegrave in town, not quite well, though I never saw her better than when she arrived; and her complaints, I believe, are merely the consequence of her situation. I asked her little girl whether she had a Waldegrave or a Walpole temper, but in more intelligible

[4] 'The fishing eagle, modelled in terra-cotta, the size of life. This bird was taken in Lord Melbourn's park at Brocket Hall, and in taking it one of the wings was almost cut off, and Mrs. Damer saw it in that momentary rage, which she remembered, and has executed exactly.' *Description of Strawberry Hill.*

phrase to her, a gentle or a violent one? She replied, 'A middling one.'

Friday night, 15th.

To-day has contradicted all I wrote last night. The Cadogans and Churchills have dined with me, and the south wind came to meet them, and we drank tea out of doors, and sat there till half an hour after eight, Strawberry never looking in greater beauty. Mr. Trevis, the Jew, came with them, of whom Lord Cadogan is as fond as the Prince. Lord Hertford is to give his Royal Highness a ball on Monday, to which I am asked; but I have sent my excuse, as dancing and the next reign are not in unison with seventy and limping. Lady Pembroke is to bring the Princess Lubomirski hither to-morrow to breakfast, which I cannot avoid; but I will not begin the chapter of grievances on the people that come to see my house. I should be as tiresome to your Ladyship as they are to me; yet you do deserve a little chastisement. What a string of lofty words have you applied to a poor old creature who never was entitled to one of them! Honour! value! admiration! —for what? of what?—mercy on me! I look into my heart, I look into my head, and find nothing in either that does not make me blush, and reject, thoroughly mortified, such unmerited compliments. Honour and value Mr. Howard, Madam; admire Mr. Sheridan; but scatter no flowers on a skeleton who is hasting to the land of oblivion, and may be well content if his faults accompany him thither!

2613. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, June 15, 1787.

In your note, on going out of town, you desired me to remember you; but as I do not like the mere servile merit of obedience, I took time, my dear Madam, to try to forget

you ; and, having failed as to my wish, I have the free-born pleasure of thinking of you in spite of my teeth, and without any regard to your injunction. No queen upon earth, as fond as royal persons are of their prerogative, but would prefer being loved for herself rather than for her power ; and I hope you have not more majesty

Than a whole race of queens.

Perhaps the spirit of your command did not mean that I should give you such manual proof of my remembrance ; and you may not know what to make of a subject who avows a mutinous spirit, and at the same time exceeds the measure of his duty. It is, I own, a kind of Irish loyalty ; and, to keep up the Irish character, I will confess that I never was disposed to be so loyal to any sovereign that was not a subject.

If you collect from all this *galimatias* that I am cordially your humble servant, I shall be content. The Irish have the best hearts in the three kingdoms, and they never blunder more than when they attempt to express their zeal and affection : the reason, I suppose, is, that cool sense never thinks of attempting impossibilities ; but a warm heart feels itself ready to do more than is possible for those it loves. I am sure our poor friend in Clarges Street[1] would subscribe to this last sentence. What English heart ever excelled hers ? I should almost have said equalled, if I were not writing to one that rivals her.

The last time I saw her before I left London, Miss Burney passed the evening there, looking quite recovered and well, and so cheerful and agreeable, that the court seems only to have improved the ease of her manner, instead of stamping more reserve on it, as I feared : but what slight graces it can give will not compensate to us and the world for the

Letter 2613.—[1] Mrs. Vesey.

loss of her company and her writings—not but that *some young ladies* who can write can stifle their talent as much as if they were under lock and key in the royal library. I do not see but *a cottage* is as pernicious to genius as the Queen's waiting-room. Why should one *remember* people that forget themselves? Oh, I am sorry I used that expression, as it is commonly applied to such self-oblivion as Mrs. ——; and light and darkness are not more opposite than the forgetfulness to which I alluded, and hers. The former forgetfulness can forget its own powers and the injuries of others; the latter can forget its own defects, and the obligations and services it has received. How poor is that language which has not distinct terms for modesty and virtue, and for excess of vanity and ingratitude! The Arabic tongue, I suppose, has specific words for all the shades of oblivion, which, you see, has its extremes. I think I have heard that there are some score of different terms for a lion in Arabic, each expressive of a different quality; and consequently its generosity and its appetite for blood are not confounded in one general word. But if an Arabian vocabulary were as numerous in proportion for all the qualities that can enter into a human composition, it would be more difficult to be learned therein, than to master all the characters of the Chinese.

You did me the honour of asking me for my *Castle of Otranto*, for your library at Cowslip Green[2]. May I, as a printer, rather than as an author, beg leave to furnish part of a shelf there? and as I must fetch some of the books from Strawberry Hill, will you wait till I can send them all together? And will you be so good as to tell me whither I shall send them, or how direct and convey them to you at Bristol? I shall have a satisfaction in thinking that they will remain in your rising cottage (in which, I hope,

[2] A cottage built by Hannah More near Wrington in Somersetshire.

you will enjoy a long series of happy hours); and that they will sometimes, when they and I shall be forgotten in other places, recall to Miss More's memory

Her very sincere humble servant,

H. Walpole.

2614. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, June 17, 1787.

I have very little to tell you since we met but disappointments, and those of no great consequence. On Friday night Lady Pembroke wrote to me that Princess Lubomirski was to dine with her the next day, and desired to come in the morning to see Strawberry. Well, my castle put on its robes, breakfast was prepared, and I shoved another company out of the house, who had a ticket for seeing it. The sun shone, my hay was cocked, we looked divinely; and at half an hour after two, nobody came but a servant from Lady Pembroke, to say her Polish altitude had sent her word she had another engagement in town that would keep her too late. So Lady Pembroke's dinner was addled; and we had nothing to do, but, like good Christians, if we chose it, to compel everybody on the road, whether they chose it or not, to come in and eat our soup and biscuits. Methinks this *liberum veto*[1] was rather impertinent, and I begin to think that the partition of Poland was very right.

Your brother has sent me a card for a ball on Monday, but I have excused myself. I have not yet compassed the whole circuit of my own garden, and I have had an inflammation in one of my eyes, and don't think I look as well as my house and my verdure; and had rather see my haycocks than the Duchess of Polignac and Madame Lubo-

Letter 2614.—[1] A reference to the custom whereby a single dissentient member of the Polish Diet was enabled to annul, by his *liberum veto*, the decisions of the whole body.

mirski. *The Way to Keep Him*[2] had the way to get me, and I could crawl to it, because I had an inclination; but I have a great command of myself when I have no mind to do anything. Lady Constant[3] was worth an hundred *acs* and *irskis*. Let me hear of you when you have nothing else to do; though I suppose you have as little to tell as you see I had.

2615. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, June 28, 1787.

I beg your Ladyship to forgive my asking you what will sound like an impertinent question: it is, whether you received an answer from me dated the 16th, to one I had the honour of receiving from you a day or two before? My reason for asking it is, that a letter I wrote on business by the same post did actually miscarry, and has given me some trouble. We have no posthouse at Twickenham, but a boy from Isleworth fetches them, and I suppose sometimes twists them to the tail of a paper-kite. If he made that use of my last to your Ladyship, perhaps you will have thought that as you gave me holidays, and told me I need not write soon, I have been flying a kite too; but my second childhood does not enable me to gambol; and if it did, you are one of the last persons from whom I would play truant.

I have been sending some layers of clove-carnations to Lady Ravensworth, for which Lady Euston wrote to me. I had not so many as I wished, the severe weather of last year having killed most of mine; and my gardener is so bad, that he does not restock me soon. I offered him an annuity some years ago if he would leave me; but he desired

[2] The first comedy represented at the theatre in Richmond House. *Walpole.*

[3] Miss Campbell, General Conway's niece, who had acted that part in the play at Richmond House.

to be excused, as it was not so good as his place, and he knew nobody else would take him; so I have been forced to keep him, because nobody else will.

As this is only a codicil to the letter I doubt you never received, Madam, it shall not be longer.

2616. To the Hon. Mrs. Boyle Walsingham.

Strawberry Hill, July 26, 1787.

Mr. Walpole was much mortified on his return from London at finding the great and flattering entertainment Mrs. Walsingham had been so good as to offer him—charmed he is sure he should have been, for does he not know Miss Boyle's genius? He would have attempted to forestall the lark and the carpenter yesterday morning, but most unfortunately the Princess Lubomirski had engaged to breakfast with him, and instead of seeing a light he was forced to show one! and Mrs. Walsingham may think what she will, but if she and Miss Boyle make Boyle Farm so delightful, as they are capable of doing, they will live to repent it. The wise men will come from the east, and all the foolish men and women in Europe, to visit it, and Miss Boyle will have made a *puppet-show*, that for once she did not intend. It cannot be wonderful that I complain of such visitation when it has cost me so dear to-day! but I trust that Mrs. Walsingham's own impatience to see her charming chimney-piece[1] again and again will soon aid Mr. Walpole and make him amends for yesterday's vexation.

Letter 2616. — Not in C.; now first printed (original in possession of the Hon. Mrs. J. R. Swinton, great-grand-daughter of Mrs. Boyle Walsingham).

[1] See the following letter.

2617. To the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, July 28, 1787.

Saint Swithin is no friend to correspondence, my dear Lord. There is not only a great sameness in his own proceedings, but he makes everybody else dull—I mean in the country, where one frets at its raining every day and all day. In town he is no more minded than the proclamation against vice and immorality[1]. Still, though he has all the honours of the *quarantaine*, I believe it often rained for forty days long before St. Swithin was born, if ever born he was; and the proverb was coined and put under his patronage, because people observed that it frequently does rain for forty days together at this season. I remember Lady Suffolk telling me that Lord Dysart's great meadow[2] had never been mowed but once in forty years without rain. I said, 'All that that proved was that rain was good for hay,' as I am persuaded the climate of a country and its productions are suited to each other. Nay, rain is good for haymakers too, who get more employment the oftener the hay is made over again. I do not know who is the saint that presides over thunder; but he has made an unusual quantity in this chill summer, and done a great deal of serious mischief, though not a fiftieth part of what Lord George Gordon did seven years ago, and happily he is fled[3].

Our little part of the world has been quiet as usual. The

Letter 2617.—[1] A Proclamation issued on June 1, 1787 'for the encouragement of piety and virtue, and for preventing and punishing of vice, profaneness, and immorality.'

[2] At Ham.

[3] Lord George Gordon was twice tried for libel in June 1787; first, for some comments on British justice in a paper written by him (which purported to be an address to himself from prisoners in Newgate); second, for remarks on Queen Marie Antoinette published in the *Public Advertiser*. Lord George was found guilty on both occasions. He retired to Holland, but was soon sent back by the Dutch magistrates.

Duke of Queensberry has given a sumptuous dinner to the Princesse de Lamballe—*et voilà tout.* I never saw her, not even in France. I have no particular *penchant* for sterling princes and princesses, much less for those of French plate.

The only entertaining thing I can tell your Lordship from our district is that old Madam French, who lives close by the bridge at Hampton Court, where, between her and the Thames, she has nothing but one grass-plot of the width of her house, has paved that whole plot with black and white marble in diamonds, exactly like the floor of a church ; and this curious metamorphosis of a garden into a pavement has cost her three hundred and forty pounds :— a tarpaulin she might have had for some shillings, which would have looked as well, and might easily have been removed. To be sure, this exploit, and Lord Dudley's obelisk *below* a hedge, with his canal at right angles with the Thames, and a sham bridge no broader than that of a violin, and *parallel* to the river[4], are not preferable to the monsters in clipt yews of our ancestors ;

Bad taste *expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.*

On the contrary, Mrs. Walsingham is making her house at Ditton (now baptized Boyle Farm) very orthodox. Her daughter Miss Boyle[5], who has real genius, has carved three tablets in marble with boys, designed by herself. Those sculptures are for a chimney-piece ; and she is painting panels in grotesque for the library, with pilasters of glass in black and gold. Miss Crewe[6], who has taste too, has decorated a room for her mother's house at Richmond, which

[4] All these circumstances actually existed till within these five years, at the villa of the late Viscount Dudley and Ward at Teddington. *Walpole.*

[5] Since married to Lord Henry Fitzgerald. *Walpole.*

[6] Emma, only daughter of John Crewe by Frances, daughter of Fulke Greville. Miss Crewe married (in 1809) Foster Cunliffe Offley, eldest son of Sir Foster Cunliffe, third Baronet.

was Lady Margaret Compton's, in a very pretty manner. How much more amiable the old women of the next age will be, than most of those we remember, who used to tumble at once from gallantry to devout scandal and cards! and revenge on the young of their own sex the desertion of ours. Now they are ingenious, they will not want amusement. Adieu, my dear Lord!

I am most gratefully

Your Lordship's very faithful humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

2618. To John Pinkerton.

Dear Sir, Strawberry Hill, Aug. 29, 1787.

Some time ago you said you would be so kind as to give me a list of the writings of Lord Elibank. I have a mind to complete my account of *Royal and Noble Authors*, for which I have amassed a great number of additions, both of works and omitted writers. I shall therefore be much obliged to you, if, without interrupting your own much more valuable writings, you can favour me with that list.

All I know of Lord Elibank's publications are the following:—

1. *Inquiry into the Origin and Consequence of the Public Debts.*

2. *Thoughts on Money, Circulation, and Paper Currency.* Edinb. 1758.

3. A pamphlet on the Scottish peerage, 1771. I do not know the title.

I have a very imperfect memorandum, made long ago, and which being only written with a pencil, is almost effaced, so that all that remains legible are these words, 'Lord Lyttelton's Correspondents, Lord Elibank's answer to ——.'

I recollect that it alluded to some remarkable anecdote; but my memory grows superannuated, and I cannot recover it. Have you any idea?

I do not even know Lord Elibank's christian name, was it Patrick?

In 1778 I cut out of a newspaper almost a whole column, containing an account of the death and character of Patrick Lord Elibank; and as he is there described as a very aged man, I conclude it was the Lord I remember, who married the widow of Lord North and Grey, and was brother of Mr. Alexander Murray, imprisoned by the House of Commons.

When I have the pleasure of seeing you here (which I hope will be in about a fortnight, when I shall be free from all engagements), I will, if you care to see it, trouble you with a sight of my intended supplement, to which, perhaps, you can contribute some additions, as I think you told me. I am in no haste, for I only intend to leave it behind me, and have actually put all the materials in order, except the article of Lord Elibank. I do not pretend to show you anything worthy of your curiosity, for nothing is more trifling than my writings; but I am glad to lay you under a sort of debt of communication, in which I am sure of being greatly overpaid.

I can tell you what is truly curious: I have a list (over and above those whom I shall mention, being dead) of at least thirty living authors and authoresses. Would not one think this a literary age? As perhaps you was not aware of what a mass of genius the House of Lords is possessed, I ought rather to say the peerage of the three kingdoms, and, of all, except two of the ladies (who are five), the works are in print, I will show you the catalogue; nay, you shall have a copy, if you please, lest so many illustrious names should be lost, when I, their painful chronicler, am not alive to record them. Nor is

there an atom of vanity in that expression. Books of peerage are like the precious spices that embalm corpses, and preserve the dead for ages.

Adieu, dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2619. To EARL HARCOURT.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 1, 1787.

I HAVE just received the honour of your Lordship's letter, with the enclosed apology of Lady George Anne Belle Amie [1], which I return, and which your Lordship charitably only calls *absurd*. You will preserve it, I hope, not merely as a *chef-d'œuvre*, but as a proof that you have been enrolled in the new *Académie de belles-lettres* without your knowledge.

You are pleased, my Lord, to ask my advice how to avoid that honour. I wish I knew, being condemned to the same distinction! The only probable way, I think, may be, by not answering the letter, and then the foundress may punish you by expulsion. I cannot promise that my nostrum will answer. I have dropped her correspondence for still *graver* reasons, and yet she heaps coals of fire on my head. Indeed I do not see how your Lordship can answer her without resenting the freedom she takes so very improperly with Lady Harcourt.

For my part, I must submit, if she chooses to make me ridiculous. I have been so foolish as to be an author (of which I most heartily repent). It is not only exposing oneself, but giving others an opportunity to expose one; and therefore, being already one of that general set of fools, it matters little if I am ranged in any particular class. I

LETTER 2619.—[1] The following remarks refer to Lady Craven, and to a society for the encouragement of arts and sciences founded by her while at the court of the Margrave of Anspach. Walpole had been anxious to avoid corresponding with her.

scratched my name out of the Society of Antiquaries, and what was I the better? Lord Buchan chose me into his congregation of wiseacres at Edinburgh!—nay, I have been called names; I have been styled in magazines *an ingenious and learned author*! now I am to be a Fellow of an Academy in Germany. I wish I do not live to be member of a Beefsteak Club in Rosemary Lane!—but these are idle distresses: it is very seriously that I am ashamed of the real honours that your Lordship has showered upon me, and of which I am so very unworthy. I wish I could command any words that would distinguish real from affected modesty; yet, when I am seventy years of age, surely I may be believed to speak truth. I have spoken too much in my life, and would not willingly, when I am dropping to earth, assume a new character. Sincerely, my Lord, I blush to come to Nuneham, to behold compliments to myself,—nay, should prefer the most palpable grimace of modesty, to impudent vanity; still I feel that it would wear the air of impertinent ingratitude, if I refused to obey your Lordship's commands.

I shall go to Park Place soon, and will thence send over to know whether my visit would be inconvenient, and yet, if there is veracity in man, I do heartily wish the circumstances of the frieze were effaced. I am happy that the tapestry[2] pleased your Lordship enough to bestow a room on it,—but surely so trifling and cheap a present, and so inadequate to the many valuable ones I have received from

[2] This tapestry was presented by Horace Walpole to Earl Harcourt, and by Earl Harcourt to Gough the antiquary. The latter bequeathed it to the University of Oxford. It is thus described in Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. vi. p. 329, note:—'Three large portions of the tapestry maps which formerly lined the Hall at Weston in Warwickshire, the seat of William Sheldon, Esq., in the reign of Henry VIII, who first introduced tapestry weaving into England, of which those three large maps were the earliest specimen. These fragments contain a section of the centre of the kingdom, including the counties of Hereford, Salop, Stafford, Worcester, Warwick, Gloucester, and Oxford, with the north part of Berks. Two of them are eight yards, by one and a quarter; the third smaller.'

your Lordship, could in no light merit an inscription! and to a name so insignificant as mine! and which will every day grow more obscure, or be remembered only by my follies, and then, depend upon it, your Lordship will wish you had taken my advice, and blotted out your legend. Consequently, I infinitely prefer doing justice on myself, to occasioning your Lordship being reproached with misplacing your favour. I have the honour to be, with great respect, my Lord,

Your Lordship's
Most obedient humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

2620. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 6, 1787.

I will not make a feigned excuse, Madam, nor catch at the pretence you kindly offer me of a lost letter; no, I confess honestly that I knew I owed you one, but was too conscientious to pay my just debts with the base currency of Richmond and Hampton Court, and I have no other specie. I know nothing, do nothing, but repeat the same insipid round that I have passed for so many summers, if summer this has been to be called. The dowagers of my canton pick up and dress up tales of what is done in London and at various watering-places; but I hold it a prudery becoming old men (the reverse of that of old women) not to trouble myself about or censure the frolics of the young; and for my contemporaries, so few of them are left, that unless by living to the age of Old Parr or Jenkins, we are not likely to commit anything remarkable. I have seen none of the French, Savoyard, or Lorraine princes and princesses, sterling or pinchbeck: I broke off my *commercial treaty* with France, when I was robbed of half Madame du

Deffand's papers, and care no more for their *bonne compagnie*, than for their convicts Monsieur de Calonne[1] and Madame de la Motte[2].

Under such a negative existence, what could I write, Madam? I have heard nothing for these two months worth telling you but this little story. There lives at Kingston a Mrs. Barnard, a very wealthy hen-Quaker. She has a passion for beautiful black and white cows, never parts with a pretty calf, and consequently has now a hecatomb as striped and spotted as leopards and tigers. The Queen happened to see this ermined drove, and being struck with the beauty of their robes, sent a page to desire to purchase one. Mrs. Barnard replied, she never sold cows, but would lend her Majesty her bull with all her heart. Apropos to court, it is not a recent story, I believe, but did you ever hear, Madam, that Mrs. Herbert, the Bedchamber Woman, going in a hackney-chair, the chairmen were excessively drunk, and after tossing and jolting her for some minutes, set the chair down; and the foreman, lifting up the top, said, 'Madam, you are so drunk, that if you do not sit still, it will be impossible to carry you'?

To prove how little I had to say, I will empty my bimensial memory with the only other scrap I have collected, and which I may send in part of payment for the four lines of *Latin* of Archbishop Tenison, which I have received from your Ladyship. Mine is an ancient Latin saw, which proves that the famous bulse was a legal escheat to the crown. In the new volume of the *Archæologia* is an essay on the state of the Jews in England in former times; and there it is said, 'Judaeus vero nihil possidere potest, quia

LETTER 2620. — [1] Calonne was at this time in England.

[2] Jeanne de Luy de St. Rémy de Valois (1756-1791), Comtesse de la Motte, sentenced in 1786 to be branded and imprisoned for life for her share in the theft of the diamond necklace. On June 5, 1787, she escaped from the Salpêtrière prison and came to London.

quicquid acquirit, acquirit regi.' I suppose nobody will dispute Mr. Hastings being a Jew; or, if you please, for *Judaeus* you may read *Indicus*, so like are the words and the essence.

Many thanks for the advertisement, which is curious indeed! I have not visited Mr. Herschel's giant telescope, though so near me. In truth, the scraps I have learnt of his discoveries have confounded me: my little head will not contain the stupendous idea of an infinity of worlds; not that I at all disbelieve them, or anything that is above my comprehension. Infinite space may certainly contain whatever is put into it: and there is no reason for imagining that nothing has been put into it, but what our short-sighted eyes can see. Worlds, systems of suns and worlds may be as plenty as blackberries; but what can such an incredibly small point as a human skull do with the possibility of Omnipotence's endless creation? Do but suppose that I was to unfold to a pismire in my garden an account of the vast empire of China—not that there is any degree of proportion in the comparison. Proceed; suppose another pismire could form a prodigious, yet invisible, spying-glass, that should give the student ant a glimpse of the continent of China. Oh, I must stop: I shall turn my own brain, which, while it is launching into an ocean of universes, is still admiring pismire Herschel. That he should not have a *wise* look does not surprise me—he may be stupefied at his own discoveries; or to make them, it might require a head constructed too simply to contain any diversity of attention to puny objects. Sir Isaac Newton, they say, was so absorbed in his pursuits, as to be something of a changeling in worldly matters; and when he descended to earth and conjecture he was no phenomenon.

I will alight from my altitudes, and confine myself to our own ant-hill. Have you seen, Madam, the horrible mandate

of the Emperor to General Murray[3]? Think of that insect's threatening to sacrifice thousands of his fellow pismires to what he calls *his dignity*! the dignity of a mite, that, supposing itself as superior as an earwig, meditates preventing hosts of its own species from enjoying the happiness and the moment of existence that has been allotted to them in an innumerable succession of ages! But while scorn, contempt, and hatred kindle against the Imperial insect, admiration crowds in for the brave pismires who so pathetically deprecate their doom, yet seem resigned to it! I think I never read anything more noble, more touching, than the remonstrance of the deputies to Prince Kaunitz.

If tyrant dignity is ready to burst on Brabant, appearances with us seem also too warlike. I shall be very sorry if it arrives. I flattered myself that in our humiliated state, the consequence of *our dignity*, we should at least be tame and tranquil for the remnant of my time; but what signifies care about moments? I will return to your letter; which set me afloat on the vasty deep of speculation, to which I am very unequal and do not love. My understanding is more on a level with your ball, and meditations on the destruction of Gorhambury, which I regret. It was in a very crazy state, but deserved to be propped; the situation is by no means delightful.

I called at Sir Joshua's, while he was at Ampthill, and saw his Hercules for Russia. I did not at all admire it: the principal babe put me in mind of what I read so often, but have not seen, *the monstrous craws*. Master Hercules's knees are as large as, I presume, the late Lady Guilford's. *Blind* Tiresias is *staring* with horror at the terrible spectacle. If Sir Joshua is satisfied with his own departed picture, it is

[3] Count Murray, governor of the Austrian Netherlands; the Emperor stated that 'the dignity of the throne' required certain concessions from those provinces before he would consent to rectify any of the abuses of which they complained.

more than the possessors or posterity will be. I think he ought to be paid in annuities only for so long as his pictures last: one should not grudge him the first-fruits.

Mr. Gibbon's three volumes[4] I shall certainly read. I am fond of quartos: and I dare to say he has laboured these, and I shall be quite satisfied if they are equal to the first tome. The *Long Minuet* you may be sure I have, as I get everything I can of Mr. Bunbury's.

Though I have wandered into another sheet, I will not be so unconscionable as to fill more of it; and make your Ladyship repent your condescension of having awakened me. I will only ask whether you have heard that the Duchess of Kingston has adopted the eldest Meadows, paid his debts, given him 600*l.* a year, and intends to make him her heir? Methinks this is robbing Peter to pay *Peter*.

Stay, I forgot to tell you, Madam, that Miss Boyle has designed and carved in marble three medallions of boys, for a chimney-piece, at Ditton. Lady Di has done two pictures for *Macbeth* and *Lear*: the latter with the madman is very fine. Now I have finished indeed.

2621. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 15, 1787.

Of such of my editions, Madam, as you say Lord Ossory has not, I am sure I had no doubt but I had given him all but one. The last time I was at Ampthill, I did desire his Lordship to look if he had all my publications, and told him I would, as far as I could, perfect his set, as I will now do; and I am glad to know which he wants, that I may supply him while I can.

[4] The three last volumes of the *History*, finished in June 1787, and published in 1788.

Pray excuse me if I say a little more on this occasion, though it will only be collaterally.

I have been long vexed at the ridiculous prices given for my editions. It could not be flattering to the vainest author or editor upon earth; for their dearness is solely to be attributed to their scarcity; and a collector who pays extravagantly for a rare book will never read *in* it, or allow anybody else, for the virgin purity of the margin is as sacred with him as the text.

When the *Anecdotes of Painting* became so ridiculously dear, which happened by collectors of portraits cutting out the prints, and using the text, I suppose, for waste paper, I printed a small edition without prints at half a crown a volume, that painters and artists might purchase them cheaply, and that nobody might pay dearly, unless by choice. This is all I can do to remedy a folly I did not certainly intend to occasion. Those *Anecdotes* are the only thing I ever published of any use; and if I reprinted my other trumpery, nobody would buy them; and I cannot afford to put myself to great expense to save the money of foolish virtuosos.

I am sorry, too, on many accounts, that this idle list has been printed; but I have several reasons for lamenting daily that I ever was either author or editor. Your Ladyship has often suspected me to continue being the former, against which I have solemnly protested, nor except the little dab on Christina of Pisan (on which I shall tell you one of my regrets) I have not written six pages on any one subject for some years. No, Madam, I have lived to attain a little more sense; and were I to recommence my life, and thought as I do now, I do not believe that any consideration could induce me to be an author. I wish to be forgotten; and though that will be my lot, it will not be so, so soon as I wish.—In short (and it is pride, not humility, that is the

source of my present sentiments), I have great contempt for middling writers. We have not only betrayed want of genius, but want of judgement. How can one of my grovelling class open a page of a standard author, and not blush at his own stuff? I took up the *First Part of Henry IV* t'other day, and was ready to set fire to my own printing-house. '*Unimitable, unimitated Falstaff!*' cried Johnson, in a fit of just enthusiasm; and yet, amongst all his repentances, I do not find that Johnson repented of having written his own *Irene*.

Well! I should grow tedious on this subject, Madam, if I gave a loose to my own reflections on that ground—I will only add two circumstances. Not designing to add Christina, as I found Lord Salisbury was *not* a noble author[1], I printed only forty copies. For this I have been abused and called *illiberal*, for not letting all the possessors of my *Noble Authors* have that scrap. Nay, a Mr. Ireland[2], a collector (I believe with interested views), bribed my engraver to sell him a print of the frontispiece, has etched it himself, and I have heard, has reprinted the piece—and I suppose will sell some copies as part of the forty. I could tell you twenty of these foolish grievances; one of which leads to my second circumstance.

In the list for which Lord Ossory asks is the *Description* of this place; now, though printed, I have entirely kept it up, and mean to do so while I live, for very sound reasons, Madam, as you will allow. I am so tormented by visitors to my house, that two or three rooms are not shown, to abridge their stay. In the *Description* are specified all the enamels and miniatures, &c., which I keep under lock and key. If the visitors got the book into their hands, I should

LETTER 2621.—[1] Horace Walpole is mistaken; the Earl of Salisbury wrote many poems in French which are mentioned by Christine de Pisan. None of them are now extant.

[2] Samuel Ireland (d. 1800), engraver, father of William Henry Ireland, the Shakespeare forger.

never get them out of the house, and they would want to see fifty articles which I do not choose they should handle and paw. The mention of the *Description* came out by two accidents. I gave an imperfect account of my collection to an old Mr. Cole, a clergyman of Cambridge, many years ago, and on his death it was sold to a bookseller. It set some gossiping virtuosos on inquiry: Mr. Gulston bribed my engravers to sell him some of my prints; Mr. Gough, without asking my leave, published a list of ten of those engravings in his *Topography*, and has occasioned my being teased for specimens, which I have refused. The list of my editions was procured by some of these *liberal* artifices—and yet is not complete—yet I am sure I have said enough, Madam, to convince you how much cause I have to regret having exposed myself to the paltry fame that belongs to an Aldus or an Elzevir, without having deserved myself to be printed by either of them!

To others these calamities must sound comic, and I own I am happy not to have more ponderous: but it is the consequence of living much alone: one must grow occupied by one's own trifling aches, when vacant of graver matter. The worst is, that solitary people are apt to grow peevish: I hope I am not so—indeed, on stating my mishaps, I see how insignificant they are, and laugh at them. I hope, Madam, you will do so too, and at me, if you please.

So little do I remember what I write, that I cannot for my life recollect what I said in my last, to which your Ladyship replies, *that Lord Ossory thinks Hercules will fail.* If you trouble yourself to explain, tell me if you know a conundrum I heard t'other day: *Why is a bad wife better than a good one?*—the solution is good, though not very civil to Eves. Oh, it has just started into my head that Hercules is Sir Joshua's; I doubt my poor memory begins to peel off; it is not the first crack I have perceived in it.

My brother, Sir Edward, made the same complaint to me before he died, and I suggested a comfort to him, that does not satisfy myself. I told him the memory is like a cabinet, the drawers of which can hold no more than they can. Fill them with papers; if you add more, you must shove out some of the former. Just so with the memory: there is scarce a day in our lives that something, serious or silly, does not place itself there, and, consequently, the older we grow, the more must be displaced to make room for new contents. 'Oh,' said my brother, 'but how do you account for most early objects remaining?'—why, the drawers are lined with gummed taffety. The first ingredients stick; those piled higgledy-piggledy upon them are tossed out without difficulty, as new are stuffed in; yet I am come to think that mice and time may gnaw holes in the sides, and nibble the papers too.

2622. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Oct. 4, 1787.

Nay, Madam, I know not how to steer between Mistress Scylla, impudent vanity, and Madam Charybdis, affected modesty. You reprove me for being decently humble, and then tell me you show my letters to Mr. Fitzpatrick. Do you think I can like that? and can I help suspecting that you are laughing at me for a credulous old simpleton? Indeed I do suspect so, and am not such a gudgeon as to swallow the hook with which you keep me in play. Mr. Fitzpatrick has too much sense and taste to be amused with the gossiping babble of my replies to the questions you put to me; and I can have no satisfaction in scribbling the trifles I send you, if they are to be seen, or if I am to ponder and guard them against being downright dotage—and how shall I discover that they are not so, if they are?

where is the touchstone on which old age is to try its decays? It will strike seventy to-morrow, and who will be so much my friend as to tell me that it might as well strike fourscore? With these convictions staring me in the face, do not imagine, my good Madam, that I suppose I can entertain one of the liveliest young men in England, and who passes his time with Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Hare. It will not be kind in you either to show my letters, or to believe that I write them to be admired. I have long been honoured with your correspondence; I lead a most insipid life, and when I hear from an old acquaintance, I own frankly I am glad to chat and throw off all the foolish things that have floated last on my mind, and that have served to amuse me for want of better employment. My letters are only fit to be seen by those who have no more rational diversions.

Your Ladyship asks me why Mr. Fitzpatrick's *Dorinda* is not specified in the catalogue of my impressions? Recollect, if you please, that I told you the list was imperfect, and not such as I avow; but I let newspapers and magazines say what they please of me without setting them right. Whoever trusts them must thank himself for being imposed on in points, indeed, so unimportant, that it matters not whether they possess truth or falsehood. This very month a magazine has republished a tale which I do not remember, and of which I will swear part is false. It is that many years ago I gave Mr. Beauclerk my tragedy, with injunctions not to show it to Garrick or Dr. Johnson. I doubt the fact very much, but am sure the reason assigned for not communicating it to the former is absolutely false: viz. because Garrick was such a goose as to prefer *Agis* to *Douglas*. Goose, and goosissime he was, if he did, but I will take my death I never heard he did; nor do I believe that any one ever did, unless the author did, who was such a goose

too, as to write *Agis*, ay, and all his other plays, after having written *Douglas*. If there is a grain of truth in the tale, it may have arisen from what I may have mentioned, and which was true, that Home, the author, showed me *Agis* in MS., and never visited or bowed to me afterwards, because I was too sincere to commend (I think it was not *Agis*, but) his *Siege of Aquileia*. I doubt, too, the truth about Johnson; you know, Madam, I never reverenced him, yet had no reason to be in terrible fear of his criticisms, for he really, as far as I have heard, always spoke civilly of my publications.

For another copy of the tragedy, your Ladyship shall have it, if you please, but not the Strawberry edition, of which I have not one left. I printed an edition when the surreptitious one was advertised; but on advertising my own, it stopped the pinchbeck one, and so I avoided publishing it at all. Oh, these would be pretty details for the eye of Mr. Fitzpatrick: indeed, I ought to blush at sending them to Lady Ossory; but if you will converse with a printer, what can he tell you but the anecdotes of his shop?

Oct. 5.

I began this in town, where I have been for two days, to see Lady Cadogan, who has lain in, and had not time to finish it. Neither the egg of war nor the egg of peace is hatched yet; so, probably, the old hen of negotiation may sit on both till spring, and then the chick of the former, being true game, may burst its shell; but, in truth, I know nothing, and saving compassion for the follies and woes of mankind, care very little about the matter. I know one loves one's country, because one has done it the honour of being born in it, and one takes the religion that happens to be in waiting at the time of one's birth, for much the same wise reason; but bating those grave prejudices, I am grown

tolerably indifferent about Europe's bloody noses, and cannot love and hate just as treaties cross over and figure in.

I am equally in the dark about any acting that has been at Park Place; and for the report of a match between Lady Constant and Sir Brilliant[1], I believe it no more than the story of St. George and the Dragon.

Monsieur le Chauvelin's[2] verses I think I have seen, and do like prodigiously, especially *La Gourmandise*, *L'Orgueil*, *La Paresse*, *L'Envie*, in short, all, though *Avarice* the least.

Thus I have answered, Madam, and prosed according to custom, and will only tell you more, that I dined last Monday at Bushy (for you know I have more *penchant* for ministers that are out than when they are in) and never saw a more interesting scene. Lord North's spirits, good humour, wit, sense, drollery, are as perfect as ever—the unremitting attention of Lady North and his children, most touching. Mr. North leads him about, Miss North sits constantly by him, carves meat, watches his every motion, scarce puts a bit into her own lips; and if one cannot help commending her, she colours with modesty and sorrow till the tears gush into her eyes. If ever loss of sight could be compensated, it is by so affectionate a family. Good night, Madam.

2623. To Miss Hannah More.

My dear Madam, Strawberry Hill, Oct. 14, 1787.

I am shocked for human nature at the repeated malevolence of this woman[1]! The rank soil of riches we are accustomed

Letter 2622.—[1] Miss Campbell and the Hon. Richard Edgcumbe had respectively played the parts of 'Lady Constant' and 'Sir Brilliant Fashion' in *The Way to Keep Him*, acted in the preceding April at Richmond House.

[2] François Claude, Marquis de Chauvelin, soldier and diplomatist; d. 1774. The verses alluded to are evidently those entitled *Les Sept Péchés Mortels*, composed by the Marquis on finding himself alone with seven ladies at L'Isle Adam, the seat of the Prince de Conti.

Letter 2623.—[1] Mrs. Yearsley.

to see overrun with seeds and thistles; but who could expect that the kindest seeds sown on poverty and dire misfortunes should meet with nothing but a rock at bottom? Catherine de' Medici, suckled by popes and transplanted to a throne, seems more excusable. Thank Heaven, Madam, for giving you so excellent a heart; ay, and so good a head. You are not only benevolence itself, but, with fifty times the genius of a Yearsley, you are void of vanity. How strange, that vanity should expel gratitude! Does not the wretched woman owe her fame to you, as well as her affluence? I can testify your labours for both. Dame Yearsley reminds me of the troubadours, those vagrants whom I used to admire till I knew their history; and who used to pour out trumpery verses, and flatter or abuse accordingly as they were housed and clothed, or dismissed to the next parish. Yet you did not set this person in the stocks, after procuring an annuity for her! I beg your pardon for renewing so disgusting a subject, and will never mention it again. You have better amusement; you love good works, a temper superior to revenge.

I have again seen our poor friend in Clarges Street[2]: her faculties decay rapidly, and of course she suffers less. She has not an acquaintance in town; and yet told me the town was very full, and that she had had a good deal of company. Her health is re-established, and we must now be content that her mind is not restless. My pity now feels most for Mrs. Hancock[3], whose patience is inexhaustible, though not insensible.

Mrs. Piozzi, I hear, has two volumes of Dr. Johnson's Letters ready for publication. Bruce is printing his *Travels*; which I suppose will prove that his narratives were fabulous, as he will scarce repeat them by the press. These, and two more volumes of Mr. Gibbon's *History*, are all the literary

[2] Mrs. Vesey. [3] A lady who lived with Mrs. Vesey. *Walpole.*

news I know. France seems sunk indeed in all respects. What stuff are their theatrical goods, their *Richards*[4], *Ninas*, and *Tarares*! But when their *Figaro* could run threescore nights, how despicable must their taste be grown! I rejoice that their political intrigues are not more creditable. I do not dislike the French from the vulgar antipathy between neighbouring nations, but for their insolent and unfounded airs of superiority. In arms we have almost always outshone them: and till they have excelled Newton, and come near to Shakespeare, pre-eminence in genius must remain with us. I think they are most entitled to triumph over the Italians; as, with the most meagre and inharmonious of all languages, the French have made more of that poverty in tragedy and eloquence, than the Italians have done with the language the most capable of both. But I did not mean to send you a dissertation. I hope it will not be long before you remove to Hampton.—Yet why should I wish that? You will only be geographically nearer to London till February. Cannot you, now and then, sleep at the Adelphi[5] on a visit to poor Vesey and your friends, and let one know if you do?

Yours, my dear Madam, most sincerely,

Hor. Walpole.

2624. To Lady Lyttelton.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 28, 1787.

It is very kind in you, my dear Madam, even to reproach me with my silence. Alas, I have no excuse to plead but one that I cannot help! I am grown so old and insipid to myself, that I never think of troubling anybody with my

[4] *Richard Cœur de Lion* and *Nina, ou la Folle par Amour*, dramas with music; *Tarare*, an opera by Beaumarchais.

[5] Mrs. Garrick, with whom Hannah More was at this time on very friendly terms, had a house in Adelphi Terrace.

nullity. I know and do nothing that is worth repeating, and therefore scarce ever write a letter. I heard with pleasure, from Lady Cecilia[1], that you are well, and very much employed, which is a proof of health; and as you have been thinning your forest, I expect to see you return to town with a pair of [cheeks as] hale as a woodman's, and I shall have great pleasure [in listening] to the babel of compliments that will be made to you on y[our goo]d looks by the representatives of all the princes in Europe at Mrs. Cosway's Diet. That, I doubt, will not be so soon as I wish; indeed, I am ignorant whether the signora is returned from Paris—but I shall know at the end of the week, when I shall remove to Londo[n to m]eet the court of Gloucester in London, the beginning [of the mont]h. Besides, the smoke of the capital is more congenial to my [health, th]an the damp of winter, and the late deluges alarm my gout.

I know, my good Lady, you never read a newspaper till it is old enough to be incorporated into the History of England, and therefore probably do not know that we have been going to war (no matter to you with whom), and that we are to have peace, of which I wish you joy, as *that* does concern you, for we could not quarrel with any part of Europe without your losing some diplomatique, and they are all in succession your friends, as they are Sir Clement Cottrell's[2]—I am not sure that he is the present introductor, or his grandson: but, like your Ladyship, I am more familiar with the images of the last reign than of the present, and we understand one another best by the old vocabulary.

You see, I hope, my dear Madam, by these old jokes, that I am rejoiced to hear from you, and answer in my ancient

LETTER 2624. — [1] Lady Cecilia Johnston. [2] The Hereditary Master of the Ceremonies.

style. I care little for new friends and new acquaintance; they t[ake no r]oot in my veteran heart, but I am constant to those tha[t are register]ed in my first almanacs. Mr. Conway is gone to Jersey, but I tr[ust the paci]fication will bring him back incontinently, and that he will see [no fir]e but those he kindles in his own lime-kilns. The Churchills are in town, tending Mrs. Walpole, and expecting another grandbabe. This is all I know of the current century, and I fear it proves how little I had to say. Though silent or tattling, I am always equally

Your Ladyship's

Sincere old friend and servant,

HOR. WALPOLE[3].

2625. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Berkeley Square, Nov. 11, 1787.

FROM violent contrary winds[1], and by your letter going to Strawberry Hill, whence I was come, I have but just received it, and perhaps shall only be able to answer it by snatches, being up to the chin in nephews and nieces. . . .[2]

I find you knew nothing of the pacification[3] when you wrote. When I saw your letter, I hoped it would tell me you was coming back, as your island is as safe as if it was situated in the Pacific Ocean, or at least, as islands there used to be, till Sir Joseph Banks chose *to put them up.* I sent you the good news on the very day before you wrote, though I imagined you would learn it by earlier intelligence. Well! I enjoy both your safety and your great success, which is enhanced by its being owing to your character

[3] Addressed 'To the Right Honourable the Lady Dowager Lyttelton, at the Cottage, Ripley.'

LETTER 2625.—[1] Mr. Conway was now in Jersey. *Walpole.*

[2] Passage omitted in first printed edition (1798).

[3] Holland had been pacified by the joint action of England and Prussia on behalf of the Stadtholder.

and abilities. I hope the latter will be allowed to operate by those who have not quite so much of either.

I shall be wonderful glad to see little Master Stonehenge[4] at Park Place; it will look in character there: but your own bridge is so stupendous in comparison, that hereafter the latter will be thought to have been a work of the Romans. Dr. Stukeley will burst his cerements to offer mistletoe in your temple; and Mason, on the contrary, will die of vexation and spite that he cannot have *Caractacus* acted on the spot. 'Peace to all such!'

——But were there one whose fires
True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires[5],

he would immortalize you, for all you have been carrying on in Jersey, and for all you shall carry off. Inigo Jones, or Charlton[6], or somebody, I forget who, called Stonehenge 'Chorea Gigantum': this will be the chorea of the pigmies; and, as I forget, too, what is Latin for Lilliputians, I will make a bad pun and say,

——*Portantur avari*
Pygmalionis *opes.*

Pygmalion is as well-sounding a name for such a monarch as Oberon. Pray do not disappoint me, but transport the

[4] Miss Berry notes:—'Mr. Walpole thus calls the small Druidic temple discovered in Jersey, which the States of that island had presented to their Governor, General Conway, to be transported to and erected at Park Place, with this inscription:—

"Pour des siècles caché au regard des mortels,
Cet ancien monument, ces pierres, ces autels,
Où le sang des humains offert en sacrifice
Ruissela pour des dieux qu'enfanta le caprice;
Ce monument sans prix par son antiquité
Témoignera pour nous à la postérité
Que dans tous les dangers Césarée eut un père
Attentif et vaillant, généreux et prospère,
Et redira Conway, aux siècles à venir,
Qu'en vertu du respect dû à ce souvenir,
Elle te fit ce don acquis à ta vaillance
Comme un juste tribut de sa reconnoissance."'

[5] Pope, *Prologue to Satires*, l. 193.

[6] Walter Charlton, M.D., author of an essay on Stonehenge entitled *Chorea Gigantum*.

cathedral[7] of your island to your domain on our *continent*. I figure unborn antiquaries making pilgrimages to visit your bridge, your daughter's bridge, and the Druidic temple; and if I were not too old to have any imagination left, I would add a sequel to Mi Li[8]. Adieu!

2626. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 3, 1787.

Your Ladyship ought not to blame my silence, which you certainly occasioned yourself. Could I be such a coxcomb as to write letters on purpose that they might be shown? I have scarce ever failed to answer yours instantly, and chiefly to questions you have asked; and in that careless hurry have scribbled the first trifle or nonsense that presented itself. I should be ashamed of doing so were my letters to be shown; and more ashamed of *preparing* them for inspection,—in short, I cannot write fine letters, nor would if I could,—I am too old to care a tush for reputation; and on the other hand cannot in cold blood invite people to laugh at me. Living in a very confined circle I rarely hear news till stale; and thus disqualified for the easiest and best part of a correspondent, I was not at all unwilling to give up an employment that could entertain you so little. It was no shadow of disrespect to you, Madam, that silenced me; but just so much regard to myself as preserves me from silly vanity, and the appearance of it.

Though I received your Ladyship's letter on Saturday, and began this reply incontinently, yet I could not find a minute for finishing it; for being confined by a slight attack of gout, I can be denied to nobody, and so many people came in, and their hour of dressing being so much later than

[7] The Druidic temple. *Walpole.*

[8] One of the *Hieroglyphic Tales*, containing a description of Park Place. *Walpole.*

mine of dining, they were so good as to bestow their vacant time on me, their idleness being of much more consequence to them than my obsolete regularity, and consequently my dinner and the post clashing, and Sunday and the post being alike incompatible, I was forced to defer this till to-day.

The return of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester engaged me but the first two or three days, for etiquette is grown so antiquated in five years and a half, that, though the Duke does not think forms and ceremonies the least delectable part of the rubric, he is forced to relax, and they both now return visits in a morning and go to assemblies in an evening; *in* course my presence is little necessary, and I can lay myself aside as Polonius would do, though not shocked as he would be at the dereliction of good old customs. However, if courts have lost their energy, it is made up to the world by the community of princes. Besides the goodly display at St. James's, there are half a dozen royal personages somewhere or other every night.

In France their Highnesses of Orléans and Bourbon are banished[1]—as far as Knightsbridge and Kensington. The monarch sat from nine in the morning till five in the evening to hear philippics—and may see louis-d'ors representing him like Corniger Ammon: the Duke of Gloucester has actually brought over one of them. After such a chapter on demigods it would be profane to mix mortal affairs, and luckily I know nothing of this nether earth.

Your Ladyship's, &c.

LETTER 2626.—[1] The Duc d'Orléans was banished to Villiers Cotterets in consequence of the King's displeasure at his conduct at a *séance royale* of the Parliament of Paris on Nov. 19, 1787. It does not appear that the Duc de Bourbon was banished.

2627. To the Hon. Thomas Walpole.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 9, 1787.

It was not at all extraordinary, dear Sir, that I should tell your daughters that I thought your marriage with Madame de Villegagnon very sensible. I have long had great respect and esteem for that lady, and have no doubt but her virtues and understanding will make you very happy: and since you despair of returning to your own country, so creditable a match in France seems a very wise measure, and the alliance will replace agreeably the friends you have left in England. I should have been very glad if your affairs would have allowed your bringing Madame Walpole over, and consequently my making my court to her in person; but, though I should hope the former may still happen, I am much too old to form any projects at all distant, and therefore must beg you, Sir, to offer my most respectful compliments and congratulations to her.

I am exceedingly glad of peace: I always wish for it for the sake of others, and *now* very interestedly, as my late time of life makes me desirous of perfect tranquillity, and of not suffering uneasiness for any of my friends, or on their account for their friends.

Whether the treaty of commerce will be advantageous or the contrary to this country, I do not pretend in the least to judge. You know, I think, how utterly ignorant I am of all matters of trade. I may say truly, of anything useful. I never had a head or an inclination for business, and have passed an idle life in amusing myself with trifles—nor do I regret my option. The abilities, integrity, and temper of my father seldom meet, and without them all, ambition,

Letter 2627.—Not in C.; reprinted from *Some Unpublished Letters of Horace Walpole*, edited by Sir Spencer Walpole, pp. 99–103.

I believe, is no path to much felicity or to solid reputation.

I am not better acquainted with the present internal politics of France, with which I have had little or no correspondence since my dear friend Madame du Deffand's death. I did cast my eye on M. de Calonne's book, but not understanding the finances or terms of finance of France, I was little the wiser. The part I did understand I admired very moderately. Eloquence has advanced with us to such masculine superiority, even in the youngest men, that studied flowers and affected pathos, composed by the pen, are in my eyes quite puerile. Calonne's apostrophe to the manes of his father made me smile, instead of touching me; and when I recollected the anecdote of La Chalotais, my smile was converted into an emotion less tender.

For my own amusement I am sorry the press of Paris is so barren of everything but politics, unless it were to send us more *Figaros* and *Tarares*! Our own press produces full as little entertainment: we lived two years upon the dotage of Dr. Johnson and his foolish biographers. Yes, I have seen one French book which I should be glad to have and cannot get, Monsr. D'Argenson's (I think it is called) *Loisirs*. There is much good sense in it, and many anecdotes; and I do not dislike it for *not* resembling what he calls his model, Montaigne, who surfeits me with his own vanity. I cannot conceive why Montaigne is so much admired, unless by people who would like to talk as much of themselves. Adieu! dear Sir.

Your most obedient humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

2628. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 15, 1787.

I am so shocked, Madam, at the account I have this instant received from your Ladyship of the fire in your house, that I must for a while postpone what relates to myself. I heartily congratulate the escapes of your persons and the preservation of your dwelling; but I do see that you have still a terrible calamity left, your suspicions, which seem too well founded. Nor can I suggest any comfort but the hope that, as you think no discovery probable, there was no internal villainy, but that it was an attempt at plunder by *outward* banditti, who had no opportunity of firing the house within. They seem to have meant to draw attention to the stables, and then to have conveyed combustibles to the top of the house, perhaps by ladders; but as I am not master exactly of the *locale*, I don't know whether my conjecture was a probable one. Indeed it is horrid to be exposed at all to such violence; yet it is much lighter than to be distracted between the dread of having execrable servants, and the horror of suspecting the innocent. I remember when General Conway's house in Warwick Street was set on fire, I was persuaded, though I did not utter a word, that his own *maître d'hôtel* was the criminal. He turned livid, looked wrapped in thought, and would scarce speak a syllable. He was a most worthy honest creature, and as the sole criminal, who was taken and confessed everything, and was executed, absolutely removed every tittle of suspicion from the *maître d'hôtel*, it proved that the poor man, being necessarily interrogated, could not support the idea of a possibility of guilt lighting on him. It had been a young secretary of Richmond House, who having frequently copied papers for Mr. Conway, and had married Mrs. Damer's maid,

was familiar in the house, had entered it in the evening unnoticed, and had concealed himself in a back room till five in the morning, when he broke open and robbed Mr. Conway's drawers, and then set fire to a number of letters and papers that lay on them, in the library under Mr. Conway's and Lady Aylesbury's bedchamber. I hope at least, Madam, that you will discover some such extrinsic villain.

I must particularly thank your Ladyship for recollecting your charge against me in such an hour of distress: your goodness in telling me your misfortune, and your saying you know how much I should interest myself in it, as I do most cordially, proves, I trust, that you neither really blame me, nor suspect me of becoming less attached to you than I have been for so many, many years. No, Madam, you do know, I am sure, that it is my own vanity and pride that has made me grow a less punctual correspondent. You have often heard me declare how jealous I am of growing superannuated, and how much I dread exposing myself in the dregs of life. I have not those happy spirits of some ancients, who totter on to the last, and do not find out, what everybody else does, that they are ridiculous. Why should I suppose that when every limb is decayed, my inside should remain more sound? My head never was strong enough for me to trust to its defying the buffets of seventy years; within this hour I have experienced its weakness. Lord Carmarthen called on me in the midst of my letter, and I have almost lost the post, by keeping him with telling him stories of his great-grandfather[1], whom I remember. I can, therefore, say nothing now of the future play at Richmond House, or of that at Ampthill; but you shall not lose a very good-humoured story of Lord North. Colonel Barré made him a visit lately: Lord North said, 'Colonel

LETTER 2628.—[1] Peregrine Osborne (1659–1729), second Duke of Leeds.

Colonel Isaac Barré

from a painting by Gilbert Stuart.

Barré, nobody will suspect us of insincerity, if we say that we should always be overjoyed to *see* each other [2].'

P.S. Pray acquaint me if you make any discovery.

Postscript to my Saturday's letter, Dec. 16, 1787.

On considering your Ladyship's account of your conflagrations more deliberately, I perceive that I mistook, and thought the *top* of the faggots had been at the top of the house. Now I conceive, or at least guess, how the event happened. I conclude some villains who knew something of your seat, but had not entrance, set fire to the stables to draw the whole attention of the family; and that, lurking at a little distance in the dark, one of them, seeing their plan succeed, and all the doors of your house left open by the servants hurrying to the stables, slipped in and set fire to the faggots, intending to plunder plate in the double confusion.

This, detestable as it was, I hope was the case.

You did not say, Madam, whether the stables were burnt down, nor what the house suffered.

The play at Richmond House is to be *The Wonder*, with *The Guardian*. The new performers are Lord Henry Fitzgerald [3], who never played in comedy before, but is good in tragedy; a Miss Hamilton, niece of Lord Abercorn, and a Captain Merry [4]. Mrs. Hobart does not play in those pieces, but is to choose her own part in the next. In return I shall expect a detail of the theatre at Ampthill.

I have had no formal gout, but several skirmishes with it that have confined me for two or three days at a time; yet I have been once at the Opera, and was tired to death; and

[2] They were both blind.

[3] Fourth son of first Duke of Leinster; d. 1829.

[4] Captain Robert Merry (1755–1798), formerly in the Guards. He first attracted notice by his verses in the *Arno Miscellany*, previously mentioned by Walpole.

though I came away the moment it was ended did not get home till a quarter before twelve. The learned call the music good, but there is nothing to show the humour and action of the Storace and Morelli. I bought the book to read at home, because the Emperor paid 1,000*l.* for the piece as a satire on the King of Sweden—how, the Lord knows. The plot is taken from Voltaire's deposed kings at Venice in his *Candide*, of whom only two are introduced, King Theodore and Sultan Achmet. The words are ten times stupider than our operas generally are; nor do I yet know that the King of Sweden, to whom I am no more partial than Cæsar is, was ever deposed. In short, if it is a satire on any mortal, it is one on Cæsar himself, for having paid so dear for such unintelligible nonsense.

My elderly cousin, Mr. Thomas Walpole, has espoused the sister of Monsieur Francès, Madame de Villegagnon, at Paris, who is no infant neither — but that is their affair.

I am going to tell you a story, Madam, that perhaps you have heard better from Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was one of the company. Lord Westcote wrote lately to Lord North, that as his Lordship was in so deplorable a condition, he, Lord Westcote, should go over to Mr. Pitt. Soon after, the Speaker, not knowing of that missive, invited Lord Westcote to dinner with a set of the opposition, who did know a little more of the matter, though pretending ignorance. The conversation soon fell on Lord George Gordon's Mosaic beard, on which one of the company said it was lucky when *converts* wore distinguishing marks by which they might be reconnoitred, and the whole dinner was carried on in the same tormenting style.

You will not be less diverted with an anecdote of your aunt[5]. She had a mind to go to Gloucester House, but

[5] The Dowager Duchess of Bedford.

declared she could not till an affair was arranged, for she had had a quarrel with the Duchess of Gloucester in the year *one*. No mortal could guess what she meant, nor do I know yet, for her Grace of Bedford herself was not born in 1700, nor the Duchess of Gloucester till 1735. The latter said they never could have had a quarrel, for they never had been intimate enough. This anachronism (in her Grace's memory) has somehow or other been rectified, and she has been at Gloucester House.

This is an inordinate postscript, and I will add no more, but that Strawberry has felt many a twitch since the fire at Ampthill.

Dec. 17, 1787.

I was at a rehearsal last night and amazed. Lord Henry is a prodigy, a perfection—all passion, nature, and ease; you never saw so genuine a lover. Garrick was a monkey to him in Don Felix[6]: then he is so much the man of fashion, and is so genteel. In short, when people of quality can act, they must act their own parts so much better than others can mimic them! Mr. Merry is an excellent Lissardo too.

2629. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 15, 1788.

All joy to your Ladyship on the success of your theatric campaign. I do think the representation of plays as entertaining and ingenious as choosing king and queen, and the gambols and mummeries of our ancestors at Christmas; or as making one's neighbours and all their servants drunk, and sending them home ten miles in the dark with the chance of breaking their necks by some comical overturn. I wish I could have been one of the audience; but, alas! I

[6] In *The Wonder*.

am like the Astracan lamb[1], and can only feed on the grass and herbs that grow within my reach.

I can make no returns yet from the theatre at Richmond House; the Duke and Duchess do not come till the Birthday, and I have been at no more rehearsals, being satisfied with two of the play. Prologue or epilogue there is to be none, as neither the plays nor the performers, in general, are new. The *Jealous Wife* is to succeed for the exhibition of Mrs. Hobart, who could have no part in *The Wonder*.

My histrionic acquaintance spreads. I supped at Lady Dorothy Hotham's with Mrs. Siddons, and have visited and been visited by her, and have seen and liked her much, yes, very much, in the passionate scenes in *Percy*; but I do not admire her in cool declamation, and find her voice very hollow and defective. I asked her in which part she would most wish me to see her? She named Portia in the *Merchant of Venice*; but I begged to be excused. With all my enthusiasm for Shakespeare, it is one of his plays that I like the least. The story of the caskets is silly, and, except the character of Shylock, I see nothing beyond the attainment of a mortal: Euripides, or Racine, or Voltaire, might have written all the rest. Moreover, Mrs. Siddons's warmest devotees do not hold her above a demigoddess in comedy. I have chosen Athenais[2], in which she is to appear soon; her scorn is admirable.

Of news I have heard none but foreign, nor those more circumstantially than the papers recount. The Russian Empress, the Austrian Emperor, and Mount Vesuvius, are playing the devil with the world. The Parliaments of France, in the usual disproportion of good to evil, are aiming at wrenching from the crown some freedom for

LETTER 2629.—[1] The Barometz or Scythian lamb described by travellers of the Middle Ages as half animal and half plant. It is sometimes represented as growing on a stem, from which it was supposed to eat grass as far as it could reach and then die. It is represented on the title-page of Parkinson's *Earthly Paradise*.

[2] In Lee's tragedy *Theodosius, or the Force of Love*.

their country; at a fortunate and wise moment, for the crown is poor, and cannot bribe even the nobility, who will mutiny since they cannot sell themselves. The elements, too, as if their pensions also were struck off, have vented their wrath on some of the costly cones at Cherbourg[3]. Well, we have a little breathing time, and may play the fool.

Apropos to Russia, did you advert, Madam, to the identity of *Prince Alexis of Brunswick*, for so the *Gazette* was pleased to call him, as if he was nothing but a cadet of a German house. Yet he was the second son of Princess Anne of Mecklenberg, and brother of poor John, the butchered Czar. Alexis was consequently the hereditary right heir of the empire, if right had any title in despotic countries, where accident, address, force, or murder, bestow the crown. It was Mr. Coxe brought me acquainted with that unfortunate branch, and the best thing I know of Catherine was her releasing Alexis and his sisters; but what excuses her imprisoning their father Prince Antony for life, who had no more title to the crown than she herself, or exactly the same—the having married a right candidate[4]?

Puppet-shows are coming on, the Birthday, the Parliament, and the trials of Hastings and his imp, Elijah. They will fill the town, I suppose.

Have you discovered nothing of your incendiaries, Madam? I swear by the beard of St. George Gordon, there seems to have been more malice than a spirit of robbery in the double conflagration.

If the young actress who played Kitty so admirably in *High Life below Stairs* is not engaged at either of the theatres at Blenheim or Winstay[5], I believe she might have

[3] The 'cones' mentioned by Walpole formed part of the works in connection with the harbour at Cherbourg. They are fully described in Arthur Young's *Travels in France*, Bohn's Library ed., pp. 119–22.

[4] The wife of Prince Antony was a niece of the Empress Anne, who died in 1740.

[5] Wynnstay in Denbighshire; the seat of Sir Watkin Williams-Wynn.

a large salary and free benefit at Richmond House, where they are in sad want of an Ines in *The Wonder*—and I am sure no daughter of Ampthill has *crooked legs*.

2630. To John Pinkerton.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 11, 1788.

I wrote a letter to Sir Joseph Banks, soliciting his interest for you, should there be a vacancy at the Museum. He answered (and I will show you his answer when I see you) that he is positively engaged to Mr. Thorkelin[1], should Mr. Planta[2] resign; but that, the Chancellor having refused to sign the permission for the latter, who will not go abroad without that indulgence, no vacancy is likely to happen from that event. Sir Joseph has since called on me, to make excuses for not complying with my request; and he then told me he thought Mr. Planta might go abroad, with the consent of the Archbishop and Speaker, without the signature of the Chancellor. I do not care about that, which would not promote your interest. I am very sorry, for your sake, that I have none; but I knew as much before.

2631. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 14, 1788.

Though I cannot use my right hand, as it is muffled up with a little gout, I must send your Ladyship a line or two, as I am extremely concerned at what I have heard. Lady Waldegrave told me yesterday that your house had again

Letter 2630.—Not in C.; reprinted from Pinkerton's *Literary Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 180.

[1] Dr. Grimr Johnson Thorkelin, a Swedish antiquary, who lived in England for some time.

[2] Joseph Planta (1744–1827), at this time Keeper of MSS. at the British Museum.

been on fire. It is shocking, indeed; and I wonder you have courage to stay in it, without a whole garrison. I beg at your leisure, Madam, you will tell me if you make any discoveries.

I got cold last week at the play at Richmond House, or rather a violent cough, which, according to the harlequinades of the gout, turned into pain in one of my fingers, and I hope will make its exit there soon, for it is but a slight gambol. Mrs. Damer is ill, and the play is postponed till Monday, if Lord Henry[1] is not run away with in the meantime, for he has raised a thousand passions.

I will not prolong my letter, having had nothing else to say, and now propose to stop my ears, that I may not be tired to death with hearing of Mr. Hastings's trial[2]. Adieu, Madam, yours, &c.

2632. To Mrs. Dickenson.

April 13, 1788.

How very kind, my dear Madam, in the midst of your own anxiety, to think of mine! I am as much obliged to you as if you yourself had cured Mrs. Delany[1]! 'Certainly recovering' (I trust she is), and that you will be rewarded by enjoying her again. But I fear you will dread London, after being received by such alarms about her and your daughter[2], who I hope remains quite well; and that she and you may live to Mrs. Delany's age, and be as much beloved.

Yours most, &c.,

H. Walpole.

Letter 2631.—[1] Lord Henry Fitzgerald.

[2] The trial of Warren Hastings before the House of Lords began in Westminster Hall on Feb 13, 1788.

Letter 2632.—Not in C.; reprinted from *Correspondence of Mrs. Delany*, vol. vi. pp. 478-9

[1] Mrs. Delany died on April 15, 1788, two days after the date of this letter, aged eighty-eight years all but one month.

[2] Louisa Frances Mary, only child of Mrs. Dickenson, afterwards married to Gen. Sir William Anson, G.C.B., of Birch Hall in Lancashire.

2633. To Richard Gough.

Berkeley Square, May 8, 1788.

Since your draftsman was with me, Sir, I can give you a little better answer to your queries than I could then extempore, especially as I had then a person with me on business. I have since been at Strawberry Hill, and thought I recollected a rude sketch of the head of Charles VI in Vertue's MSS. I was so lucky as to find it, and enclose a still ruder sketch (for I never could draw well, and my lame fingers are still more incapable now). The attire of the head is precisely the same with that of our Fourth Henry. Vertue's account I have transcribed too.—I was very sure I had seen somewhere an account of Joan of Navarre [1] being suspected by Henry the Fifth. I looked into Stow, Holinshed, and Hall. But they mention no such thing, nor can I recollect where I found it; but Rapin does touch on it briefly in the place I have set down. Still I am positive I have seen rather a fuller account of it, though I cannot recall where.—I hope, Sir, you received the letter in which I told you of my imperfect negotiation with Lord Monson about the pictures at Broxbourne [2], which I sent the day before your draftsman was with me, and directed to you, as you ordered, at Enfield. I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

Letter 2633.—Not in C.; reprinted from Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. vi. p. 291.

[1] Second wife of Henry IV and step-mother of Henry V. The passage in Rapin's *History of England* (ed. 1732, vol. i. book xi. p. 520) is as follows:—'In some histories, it is said, this Year [1417] Queen Joanna of Navarre, Widow of Henry IV, and Mother-in-law of the reigning King, was accused of conspiring, with her Confessor, against the King. Some add, she was condemned to a ten years Imprisonment, and that her Confessor was killed by the Chaplain of the Tower, in a Dispute upon that Occasion.' Rapin gives Stow as one of his authorities for this statement.

[2] Lord Monson's seat, near Hoddesden in Hertfordshire.

2634. To Thomas Barrett.

Berkeley Square, June 5, 1788.

I wish I could charge myself with any merit, which I always wish to have towards you, dear Sir, in letting Mr. Matthew see Strawberry; but in truth he has so much merit and modesty and taste himself, that I gave him the ticket with pleasure, which it seldom happens to me to do; for most of those who go thither go because it is the fashion, and because *a party* is a prevailing custom too; and my tranquillity is disturbed, because nobody likes to stay at home. If Mr. Matthew was really entertained, I am glad; but Mr. Wyatt has made him too correct a Goth not to have seen all the imperfections and bad execution of my attempts; for neither Mr. Bentley nor my workmen had *studied* the science, and I was always too desultory and impatient to consider that I should please myself more by allowing time, than by hurrying my plans into execution before they were ripe. My house therefore is but a sketch by beginners, yours[1] is finished by a great master; and if Mr. Matthew liked mine, it was *en virtuose*, who loves the dawnings of an art, or the glimmerings of its restoration.

I finished Mr. Gibbon a full fortnight ago, and was extremely pleased. It is a most wonderful mass of information, not only on history, but almost on all the ingredients of history, as war, government, commerce, coin, and what not. If it has a fault, it is in embracing too much, and consequently in not detailing enough, and in striding backwards and forwards from one set of princes to another, and from one subject to another; so that, without much historic knowledge, and without much memory, and much method in one's memory, it is almost impossible not to be some-

Letter 2634.—[1] Lee Priory, near Canterbury.

times bewildered: nay, his own impatience to tell what he knows, makes the author, though commonly so explicit, not perfectly clear in his expressions. The last chapter of the fourth volume, I own, made me recoil, and I could scarcely push through it. So far from being Catholic or heretic, I wished Mr. Gibbon had never heard of Monophysites, Nestorians, or any such fools! But the sixth volume made ample amends; Mahomet and the popes were gentlemen and good company. I abominate fractions of theology and reformation.

Mr. Sheridan, I hear, did not quite satisfy the passionate expectation that had been raised[2]; but it was impossible he could, when people had worked themselves into an enthusiasm of offering fifty—ay, *fifty* guineas for a ticket to hear him. Well, we are sunk and deplorable in many points, yet not absolutely gone, when history and eloquence throw out such shoots! I thought I had outlived my country; I am glad not to leave it desperate! Adieu, dear Sir!

Yours most sincerely,
HOR. WALPOLE.

2635. To the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday night, June 17, 1788.

I GUESS, my dear Lord, and only guess, that you are arrived at Wentworth Castle. If you are not, my letter will lose none of its bloom by waiting for you; for I have nothing fresh to tell you, and only write because you enjoined it. I settled in my Lilliputian towers but this morning. I wish people would come into the country on May-day, and fix in town the first of November. But as

[2] Of his speech in Westminster Hall, upon bringing forward one of the charges against Mr. Hastings. *Walpole.*

they will not, I have made up my mind; and having so little time left, I prefer London, when my friends and society are in it, to living here alone, or with the weird sisters of Richmond and Hampton. I had additional reason now, for the streets are as green as the fields: we are burnt to the bone, and have not a lock of hay to cover our nakedness: oats are so dear, that I suppose they will soon be eaten at Brooks's and fashionable tables as a rarity. The drought has lasted so long, that for this fortnight I have been foretelling haymaking and winter, which June generally produces; but to-day is sultry, and I am not a prophet worth a straw. Though not resident till now, I have flitted backwards and forwards, and last Friday came hither to look for a minute at a ball at Mrs. Walsingham's at Ditton; which would have been very pretty, for she had stuck coloured lamps in the hair of all her trees and bushes, if the east wind had not danced a reel all the time by the side of the river.

Mr. Conway's play[1], of which your Lordship has seen some account in the papers, has succeeded delightfully, both in representation and applause. The language is most genteel, though translated from verse; and both prologue and epilogue are charming. The former was delivered most justly and admirably by Lord Derby, and the latter with inimitable spirit and grace by Mrs. Damer. Mr. Merry and Mrs. Bruce played excellently too. But General Conway, Mrs. Damer, and everybody else are drowned by Mr. Sheridan, whose renown has engrossed all fame's tongues and trumpets[2]. Lord Townshend said he should be sorry were he forced to give a vote directly on Hastings,

LETTER 2635.—[1] A comedy translated from *L'Homme du Jour* of Boissy. It was first acted at the private theatre at Richmond House, and afterwards at Drury Lane. *Walpole.*

[2] From the speech he made in Westminster Hall, on bringing the charge of cruelty to the Begums of the province of Benares, in the trial of Mr. Hastings. *Walpole.*

before he had time to cool; and one of the peers saying the speech had not made the same impression on him, the Marquis replied, 'A seal might be finely cut, and yet not be in fault for making a bad impression.'

I have, you see, been forced to send your Lordship what scraps I brought from town. The next four months, I doubt, will reduce me to my old sterility; for I cannot retail French Gazettes, though as a good Englishman bound to hope they will contain a civil war. I care still less about the double Imperial campaign, only hoping that the poor dear Turks will heartily beat both Emperor and Empress. If the first Ottomans could be punished, they deserved it, but the present possessors have as good a prescription on their side as any people in Europe. We ourselves are Saxons, Danes, Normans; our neighbours are Franks, not Gauls; who the rest are, Goths, Gepidæ, Heruli, Mr. Gibbon knows; and the Dutch usurped the estates of herrings, turbots, and other marine *indigenæ*. Still, though I do not wish the hair of a Turk's beard hurt, I do not say that it would not be amusing to have Constantinople taken, merely as a lusty event; for neither could I live to see Athens revive, nor have I much faith in two such bloody-minded vultures, cock and hen, as Catherine and Joseph, conquering for the benefit of humanity; nor does my Christianity admire the propagation of the Gospel by the mouth of cannon. What desolation of peasants and their families by the episodes of forage and quarters! Oh, I wish Catherine and Joseph were brought to Westminster Hall and worried by Sheridan! I hope, too, that the poor Begums are alive to hear of his speech; it will be some comfort, though I doubt nobody thinks of restoring them a quarter of a lac!

Adieu, my dear Lord!

Yours most faithfully,

HORACE WALPOLE.

2636. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, July 4, 1788.

I am soundly rejoiced, my dear Madam, that the present summer is more favourable to me than the last; and that, instead of not answering my letters in three months, you open the campaign first. May not I flatter myself that it is a symptom of your being in better health? I wish, however, you had told me so in positive words, and that all your complaints have left you. Welcome as is your letter, it would have been ten times more welcome bringing me that assurance; for don't think I forget how ill you was last winter. As letters, you say, now keep their coaches[1], I hope those from Bristol will call often at my door. I promise you I will never be denied to them.

No botanist am I; nor wished to learn from *you*, of all the Muses, that *piping* has a new signification. I had rather that *you* handled an oaten pipe than a carnation one; yet setting layers, I own, is preferable to reading newspapers, one of the chronical maladies of this age. Everybody reads them, nay, quotes them, though everybody knows they are stuffed with lies or blunders. How should it be otherwise? If any extraordinary event happens, who but must hear it before it descends through a coffee-house to the runner of a daily paper? They who are always wanting news are wanting to hear they don't know what. A lower species, indeed, is that of the scribes you mention, who every night compose a journal for the satisfaction of such *illiterati*, and feed them with all the vices and misfortunes of every private family; nay, they now call it a *duty* to publish all

Letter 2636.—[1] Mail coaches as a conveyance for letters were established in 1784 on the suggestion of Palmer, manager of the Bath theatre.

those calamities which decency to wretched relations used in compassion to suppress, I mean self-murder in particular. Mr. ——'s[2] was detailed at length; and to-day that of Lord ——[3]. The pretence is, *in terrorem*, like the absurd stake and highway of our ancestors; as if there were a precautionary potion for madness, or the stigma of a newspaper were more dreadful than death. Daily journalists, to be sure, are most respectable magistrates! Yes, much like the cobblers that Cromwell made peers.

I do lament your not going to Mr. Conway's play: both the author and actors deserve such an auditor as you, and you deserved to hear them. However, I do not pity *good* people who out of virtue lose or miss any pleasures. Those pastimes fleet as fast as those of the wicked; but, when gone, you saints can sit down and feast on your self-denial, and drink bumpers of satisfaction to the health of your own merit. So truly I don't pity you.

You say you hear no news, yet you quote Mr. Topham[4]; therefore why should I tell you that the King is going to Cheltenham? or that the Baccelli lately danced at the Opera at Paris with a blue bandeau on her forehead, inscribed, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*? Now who can doubt but she is as pure as the Countess of Salisbury[5]? Was not it ingenious? and was not the Ambassador[6] so to allow it? No doubt he took it for a compliment to his own knee.

Well, would we committed nothing but follies! What

[2] Probably George Hesse, a boon companion of the Prince of Wales, who shot himself at his house in the Adelphi on June 1, 1788. (See *Gent. Mag.* 1788, pt. i. p. 563.)

[3] Apparently Lord Saye and Sele, who died on July 4, 1788.

[4] Major Edward Topham (1751–1820), editor of the daily paper called *The World*.

[5] Joan Plantagenet, 'the Fair Maid of Kent,' Countess of Salisbury, wife of Edward the Black Prince, and mother of Richard II. The Order of the Garter is sometimes said to have been founded in her honour after the fall of her garter when dancing.

[6] The Duke of Dorset; the Baccelli was his mistress.

do we not commit when the abolition of slavery hitches[7]! Adieu!

Though Cato died, though Tully spoke,
Though Brutus dealt the godlike stroke,
Yet perish'd fated Rome[8].

You have written; and I fear that even if Mr. Sheridan speaks, trade, the modern religion, will predominate. Adieu!

Yours most sincerely,

Hor. Walpole.

2637. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, July 9, 1788.

To be sure, Madam, I was not in good charity with you for not coming to Strawberry, which you have abandoned for these three years. You think to make it up by inquiring after my howd'yedo-ness, and, though I will forgive once more, I will inform your Ladyship that one's self-love is not at all limited to one's specific person, but insinuates itself into everything that belongs to one—to one's house, to one's garden, to one's collection, and

Feels at each thread, and lives along the line[1].

People may cram one with attentions, and affront one at the same time, by neglecting some trifling object on which one's heart is set. Lovers gain ground by doting on their charmer's lap-dog, and toad-eaters worship their patroness's taste in every circumstance; they admire her attitude on a hassock or at a quinze-table. These are only general hints; but the corollary is that Lady Anne is much more in my good graces than the Countess, her honoured mother.

[7] A resolution pledging the House of Commons to deal with the slave trade was moved by Pitt on May 9, 1788, and passed, and an Act imposing restrictions upon it passed both Houses.

[8] From Lord Nugent's *Ode*.

Letter 2637.—[1] *Essay on Man*, I. 218.

Still I own myself obliged to your Ladyship for the printed advertisement, which I had not seen. Unluckily my self-love does not extend to my writings, and I had rather you had made a visit to Strawberry than an addition to my *Royal Authors*. As I raise none from the dead till they have been interred in the churchyard of the temple of fame, Cheltenham[2], it is to be hoped, will save me the trouble of a codicil.

Indeed, I have been in doubt whether I had not lately *put up* a prince who had some title to figure in my Catalogue. Mlle Keralio, in her *Collection des meilleurs ouvrages françois composés par des femmes*, has produced two little poems, composed in English, by the Duke of Orléans[3], who was prisoner here for five-and-twenty years after the battle of Agincourt; but, alas! they are as indifferent as if they had been composed by the present ornament of his title! and therefore, though Christina of Pisan had lent her lover, Lord Salisbury, merit enough to be adopted, I shall not naturalize the French prince.

Mr. Selwyn has been confined in town by a fever, and I have not seen him since the royal progress was intended[4]. I do hope his Matson will be illustrated again, as it was at the siege of Gloucester. How happy he would be to have the present Prince of Wales and Duke of York leave their names, with a penknife, on his window, as the sons of Charles I did[5], though, unless some of the personages end as unfortunately, he will never be so fond of them.

You know, I suppose, Madam, that the second Prince[6] has purchased Oatlands. That, too, is a circumstance that will chime with Selwyn's partialities. King Charles's third

[2] The King arrived at Cheltenham on July 12, 1788.

[3] Charles (1391–1464), Duc d'Orléans, father of Louis XII of France.

[4] The King and Queen visited Matson on July 29.

[5] See letter to Cole of Aug. 15, 1774.

[6] The Duke of York.

son was born there, and called Henry of Oatlands[7]. I am to go thither to-morrow to see the grotto, which I have neglected doing hitherto, though so much within my reach; yes, I am going to see the *speluncam* where—

Dido Dux et——

My verdure begins to recover its bloom, Madam, like yours. I did not despair, for, in this country, nobody pays his debts like rain. It may destroy your flowers, but you cannot complain of want of fruit; cherries, apples, walnuts, are more exuberant than their leaves; I don't believe that a single blossom will fail of coming of age. Cherries, I am told, are cried in London at a halfpenny a pound—Kentish ones, I mean—which is cheaper than they have been since William the Conqueror landed there.

Having no news for your eye or ear, I enclose a drawing that I got a young lady at Richmond to copy for me t'other day, and which Lady Anne may multiply easily, by tracing over it against the window. I hope you will be as much diverted with it as I was; it proves the truth of the old saying that two heads are better than one.

As I find I am already too late for our post, which comes in at eleven and goes out at one, for the benefit of trade—not for the trade of correspondence, I am sure—I will leave a corner till I have been at Oatlands.

Thursday night.

Woe is me! I don't know whether it is that I am grown old and cross, but I have been disappointed. Oatlands, that my memory had taken it into its head was the centre of Paradise, is not half so Elysian as I used to think. The grotto, a magnificent structure of shell-work, is a square regular edifice, and, which never happed to grotto before, lives up one pair of stairs, and yet only looks on a basin of

[7] Henry Stuart (1640–1660), Duke of Gloucester.

dirty water; in short, I am returned to my own Thames with delight, and envy none of the princes of the earth.

2638. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, July 12, 1788.

Won't you repent having opened the correspondence, my dear Madam, when you find my letters come so thick upon you? In this instance, however, I am only to blame in part, for being too ready to take advice, for the sole reason for which advice ever is taken—because it fell in with my inclination.

You said in your last that you feared you took up time of mine to the prejudice of the public; implying, I imagine, that I might employ it in composing. Waiving both your compliment and my own vanity, I will speak very seriously to you on that subject, and with exact truth. My simple writings have had better fortune than they had any reason to expect; and I fairly believe, in a great degree, because gentlemen writers, who do not write for interest, are treated with some civility if they do not write absolute nonsense. I think so, because I have not unfrequently known much better works than mine much more neglected, if the name, fortune, and situation of the authors were below mine. I wrote early from youth, spirits, and vanity; and from both the last when the first no longer existed. I now shudder when I reflect on my own boldness; and with mortification, when I compare my own writings with those of any great authors. This is so true, that I question whether it would be possible for me to summon up courage to publish anything I have written, if I could recall time past, and should yet think as I think at present. So much for what is over and out of my power. As to writing now, I have totally forsworn the profession, for two solid reasons.

One I have already told you; and it is, that I know my own writings are trifling and of no depth. The other is, that, light and futile as they were, I am sensible they are better than I could compose now. I am aware of the decay of the middling parts I had, and others may be still more sensible of it. How do I know but I am superannuated? nobody will be so coarse as to tell me so; but if I published dotage, all the world would tell me so. And who but runs that risk who is an author after seventy? What happened to the greatest author of this age, and who certainly retained a very considerable portion of his abilities for ten years after my age? Voltaire, at eighty-four, I think, went to Paris to receive the incense, in person, of his countrymen, and to be witness of their admiration of a tragedy he had written at that Methusalem age. Incense he did receive till it choked him; and, at the exhibition of his play, he was actually crowned with laurel in the box where he sat. But what became of his poor play? It died as soon as he did—was buried with him; and no mortal, I dare to say, has ever read a line of it since, it was so bad.

As I am neither by a thousandth part so great, nor a quarter so little, I will herewith send you a fragment that an accidental rencontre set me upon writing, and which I found so flat that I would not finish it. Don't believe that I am either begging praise by the stale artifice of hoping to be contradicted; or that I think there is any occasion to make you discover my caducity. No; but the fragment contains a curiosity—English verses written by a French prince of the blood [1], and which at first I had a mind to add to my *Royal and Noble Authors*; but as he was not a royal author of ours, and as I could not please myself

LETTER 2638.—[1] Charles d'Orléans. Walpole's account of him is printed as an Appendix to *Royal and Noble Authors*; see *Works*, vol. i. pp. 562–7.

with an account of him, I shall revert to my old resolution of not exposing my pen's grey hairs.

Of one passage I must take notice; it is a little indirect sneer at our crowd of authoresses. My choosing to send this to *you* is a proof that I think you an author, that is, a classic. But, in truth, I am nauseated by the Madams Piozzi, &c., and the host of novel writers in petticoats, who think they imitate what is inimitable, *Evelina* and *Cecilia*. Your candour, I know, will not agree with me, when I tell you I am not at all charmed with Miss Seward and Mr. Hayley piping to one another: but *you* I exhort, and would encourage to write; and flatter myself you will never be royally gagged and promoted to fold muslins, as has been lately wittily said on Miss Burney, in the list of five hundred living authors. *Your* writings promote virtues; and their increasing editions prove their worth and utility. If you question my sincerity, can you doubt my admiring you, when you have gratified my self-love so amply in your *Bas Bleu*? Still, as much as I love your writings, I respect yet more your heart and your goodness. You are so good that I believe you would go to heaven, even though there were no Sunday, and only six *working* days in the week. Adieu, my best Madam!

Yours most cordially,

Hor. Walpole.

P.S. On recollection, I doubt I have before given you the same reasons for my lying fallow that I have in this letter. If so, why, it is like an old man to repeat himself—but at least I will not do so in print.

2639. To Viscount Beauchamp [1].

My dear Lord, Strawberry Hill, July 13, 1788.

Though I doubt, roving as you are, whether this will light upon you, I must endeavour to thank you for the honour of your letter; though it makes me not a little ashamed. When you asked for my simple volume, I concluded it was for some Englishman; and as I have exposed myself too much to my countrymen by my trifling writings, it was in vain to excuse myself. I should have had more scruples had I known it was intended for a learned foreigner of a family distinguished by learning—indeed I had no notion of being known out of our own island, except at Paris where I have lived so much, and where by this time I must be pretty much forgotten—but I will say no more, because acting modesty always looks like asking for compliments, which at seventy-one would only prove that I am superannuated.

I live too much out of the world, and care too little about its affairs, to send you political news, of which I know nothing but the surface. This last week has produced some changes, chiefly in the Admiralty [2]; and from abroad we hear that a new war is tapped between Russia and Sweden. If I am indifferent at home I am totally so about their northern Majesties, and if they will destroy their subjects, I care not which has the disadvantage, for I cannot help thinking that the interests of thousands are of more consequence than those of one individual. War is a game, but unfortunately the cards, counters, and fishes suffer by an ill run more than the gamesters.

Letter 2639. — Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Messrs. J. Pearson & Co.

[1] Afterwards Earl of Yarmouth and Marquis of Hertford.

[2] Lord Hood and the Earl of Chatham had been appointed Lords of the Admiralty.

I think your Lordship's son fortunate in seeing Europe under your own eye, and it will make it less necessary for him to travel, as is generally done, at an age when he should be studying his own country. I beg my respectful compliments to Lady Beauchamp and him, and have the honour to be with great regard,

My dear Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2640. To THOMAS WALPOLE THE YOUNGER.

DEAR SIR, Strawberry Hill, July 21, 1788.

I can but too easily excuse myself for being so irregular a correspondent, as I have had two fits of the gout since last Christmas; and, as my hands are always the most affected, it is no wonder that so old a man is willing to indulge them. I did, indeed, answer Lady Craven's last letter in November, though I have reason to think she did not receive it, as I have before heard she complained of me. It is very true that I have not been eager to revive that commerce, both from the lameness of my hands and from my apprehension of her Ladyship's literary activity, having no ambition to figure in *Les Mémoires de l'Académie d'Anspach*, of which she was pleased to enroll me. I am, moreover, of opinion that a veteran author ought to take out his quietus as much as the superannuated of any other profession, and with so much more reason, as every man can be sure of having lost the use of his limbs, but is not so good a judge whether he has lost the use of his head or not.

I mightily approve Lady Craven's blending the dairy with

LETTER 2640.—Not in C.; reprinted from *Some Unpublished Letters of Horace Walpole*, edited by Sir Spencer Walpole, pp. 103–6.

the library as an example to her sex, who at present are furiously apt to abandon the churn totally, like the abominable milkwoman at Bristol, who has been so ungrateful and abusive to her kind benefactress, Miss Hannah More. We have hen novelists and poetesses in every parish, and Lady Craven might institute a whole academy of her own gender.

I am very glad, dear Sir, that your situation is improved: a more active and animated scene would be certainly more amusing: but to be comfortable is the first step to amusement. You can, at least, make more frequent little excursions: and if little courts are not interesting, their mimicry of grander follies is diverting and various—diverting to anybody but to their plundered subjects, who, even so, are lucky if they are not sold as mercenaries!

I, you know, do not lament that your great neighbour[1] makes so poor a figure in his campaign. His female ally[2] seems to be still more embarrassed. Her memorial in answer to the Swedes is not at all in the stout Semiramis style she had assumed.

Our summer, usually dull, is enlivened by the royal journey to Cheltenham, and another Westminster election —at least the newspapers are not reduced to mere invention and lies from Ireland; but, as those influences do not reach to Twickenham, my letter receives no aid: nor have we had any event, but a great cricket-match at Hampton, which was interrupted by St. Swithin.

Lord Frederic Cavendish has succeeded my poor old friend, the Duchess of Montrose, at Twickenham Park, but I much doubt whether he will reside there. The Duke of York has bought Oatlands for three and forty thousand pounds. My neighbour, Sir George Pococke, was much obliged by your civilities to his son. What can I tell you more from hence? Why should one write more than one

[1] The Emperor Joseph II. [2] The Czarina.

has to say? Adieu, then, dear Sir, and be assured I am with great regard,

Your affectionate and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2641. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, July 22, 1788.

I know well, Madam, that I ought to have thanked you sooner for the double heads drawn by Lady Anne, who has married them very happily; but, however full the heart may be of gratitude, thanks will not fill a letter, and you certainly had rather receive a phial of news than a quart of effusions of all the virtues that could be distilled; but, alas! my laboratory is as empty of novelty as of such essences, and, like an apothecary's shop, has only empty gallipots, with labels of what they ought to contain, gratitude excepted, which I have in the root.

You say, Madam, you did not leave yourself room to form a new administration. I have plainly paper enough before me for that purpose; but there too I am no adept, and content myself, like the sovereign maker of ministers, with being more glad of those I get rid of, than fond of their successors. Were I in town, I should chiefly take care to avoid being within reach of the bludgeon fist of Mrs. H.[1], who must be in a sweet mood on having lost her trident, after all her intrigues to fix it in her brother's hand. I started prodigiously into her favour the last time General Conway came into place, and she told me her eldest niece was passionately fond of poetry, and died to read my tragedy, which I lent her. Mr. Conway went out, and I never heard more of Miss's taste for the *belles-lettres*. In

LETTER 2641.—[1] Mrs. Howe, sister of Earl Howe.

her room I have got a new admirer, though an anonymous one. It is the gentleman[2] who has dedicated to me and Sir Joshua Reynolds two quarto pieces, called *Imperfect Hints for a new Edition of Shakespeare.* In one of the notes, the author, with great good nature, calls me *time-honoured Lancaster.* Beshrew me, little did I think that my shadow of a person would, in any point, ever come in contact with the giant mould of John of Gaunt; but I find that one has nothing to do but to live long enough, and somehow or other, one may grow like to anybody; but I must tell your Ladyship of a more diverting application, if not of an ancient passage, at least of venerable customs. You may know, perhaps, that in days of yore the flaps of seats in choirs of cathedrals were decorated with sculptures, sometimes with legends, often, alas! with devices, at best ludicrous, frequently not fit to meet the eye of modesty! Well, Madam, two new stalls being added in the church of St. George, at Windsor, as niches for the supernumerary knights that have been added, the custom has been observed and carried on in the new flaps—not to call up a blush in the cheek of Mother Church, but in the true Catholic spirit; one of the bas-reliefs I do not know, but probably the martyrdom of St. Edmund the King; the other is the ineffected martyrdom of George the King, by Margaret Nicholson. The body-coachman is standing by to ascertain the precise moment. If you had not heard of this decoration, I will not say, Madam, that I had no news to send you; at least I may subscribe myself

Your Ladyship's humble clerke and antiquarie,

H. W.

[2] His name was Samuel Felton.

2642. To Thomas Astle.

Strawberry Hill, July 29, 1788.

A thousand thanks to you, dear Sir, for King Alfred's will, and for the most superb of all royal locks, nay, and for the most secure one, for I am sure it could not be picked but by a pickaxe. There is mechanism enough about it to lift the drawbridge of a citadel, and one grieves that such complicated ingenuity should have been employed for the simple operation of unlocking a door. By the beauty of the Gothic border, and by the rose and crown, I imagine it to have been manufactured in the reign of Henry VII, and by the prodigious weight of metal and involved machinery, I should think his Majesty had set half a dozen of the strongest Cyclopses of his Board of Works to fashion this lock for the door of his exchequer and hoard at Shene.

I have company with me, and expect another party when they are gone,—or I would wait on you with my thanks in person, as I will as soon as I am at liberty, being with great gratitude and regard,

Dear Sir,

Your much obliged

And obedient humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

2643. To the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 2, 1788.

Matter for a letter, alas! my dear Lord, I have none; but *about* letters I have great news to tell your Lordship, only may the goddess of post offices grant it be true! A Miss Sayer, of Richmond, who is at Paris, writes to

Letter 2642.—Not in C.; reprinted from *Notes and Queries*, March 6, 1869.

Mrs. Boscawen, that a Baron de la Garde (I am sorry there are so many *a*'s in the genealogy of my story) has found in a *vieille armoire* five hundred more letters of Madame de Sévigné, and that they will be printed if the expense is not too great. I am in a taking lest they should not appear before I set out for the Elysian Fields; for, though the writer is one of the first personages I should inquire after on my arrival, I question whether St. Peter has taste enough to know where she lodges. He is more likely to be acquainted with St. Catherine of Sienna and St. Undecimillia[1]; and therefore I had rather see the letters themselves. It is true, I have no small doubt of the authenticity of the legend; and nothing will persuade me of its truth so much as the non-appearance of the letters—a melancholy kind of conviction. But I vehemently suspect some new coinage, like the letters of Ninon de l'Enclos, Pope Ganganelli, and the Princess Palatine. I have lately been reading some fragments of letters of the Duchess of Orléans[2], which are certainly genuine, and contain some curious circumstances; for though she was a simple gossiping old gentlewoman, yet many little facts she could not help learning: and, to give her her due, she was ready to tell all she knew. To our late Queen[3] she certainly did write often; and her Majesty, then only Princess, was full as ready to pay her in her own coin, and a pretty considerable treaty of commerce for the exchange of scandal was faithfully executed between them; insomuch that I remember to have heard forty years ago, that our gracious sovereign entrusted her Royal Highness of Orléans with an intrigue of one of her Women of the Bedchamber, Mrs. S.[4], to wit; and the good Duchess entrusted it to so many other dear friends that at last it got into the

LETTER 2643.—[1] St. Ursula.

[2] Elizabeth Charlotte (1652–1722), daughter of Charles Louis, Elector of Bavaria, and second wife of Philippe, Duc d'Orléans.

[3] Caroline, Queen of George II.

[4] Probably Mrs. Selwyn.

Utrecht *Gazette*, and came over hither, to the signal edification of the court of Leicester Fields. This is an additional reason, besides the internal evidence, for my believing the letters genuine. This old dame was mother of the Regent; and when she died, somebody wrote on her tomb, *Cy gist l'Oisiveté.* This came over too; and nobody could expound it till our then third Princess, Caroline, unravelled it—Idleness is the mother of all vice.

I wish well enough to posterity to hope that dowager Highnesses will imitate the practice, and write all the trifles that occupy their royal brains; for the world so at least learns some true history, which their husbands never divulge, especially if they are privy to their own history, which their ministers keep from them as much as possible. I do not believe the present King of France knows much more of what he, or rather his Queen, is actually doing, than I do. I rather pity him; for I believe he means well, which is not a common article of my faith.

I shall go about the end of this week to Park Place, where I expect to find the Druidic temple from Jersey erected. How dull will the world be, if constant pilgrimages are not made thither! where, besides the delight of the scenes, that temple, the great rude arch, Lady Aylesbury's needleworks, and Mrs. Damer's Thame and Isis on Henley Bridge, with other of her sculptures, make it one of the most curious spots in the island, and unique. I want to have Mr. Conway's comedy acted there; and then the father, mother, and daughter would exhibit a theatre of arts as uncommon. How I regret that your Lordship did not hear Mrs. Damer speak the epilogue!

I am, my dear Lord,
Your Lordship's most faithful humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

2644. To John Pinkerton.

Dear Sir, Strawberry Hill, Aug. 14, 1788.

The new regulation of the post proves very inconvenient to this little district; for it arrives and departs again in half an hour; so that having a visit when I received your letter yesterday, I could not possibly answer it then, nor can I write now expeditiously, as for these thirteen days I have had a third fit of the gout in my left arm and hand, and can barely hold the paper.

Your intelligence of the jubilees to be celebrated in Scotland in honour of the Revolution was welcome indeed. It is a favourable symptom of an age when its festivals are founded on good sense and liberality of sentiment, and not to perpetuate superstition and slavery. Your countrymen, Sir, have proved their good sense, too, in their choice of a poet. Your writings breathe the noble generous spirit congenial to the institution. Give me leave to say, that it is very flattering to me to have the ode communicated to me: I will not say, to be consulted, for of that distinction I am not worthy: I am not a poet, and am sure I cannot improve your ideas, which you have expressed with propriety and clearness, the necessary ingredients of an address to a populous meeting; for I doubt our numerous audiences are not arrived at Olympic taste enough to seize with enthusiasm the eccentric flights of Pindar. You have taken a more rational road to inspiration, by adhering to the genuine topics of the occasion; and you speak in so manly a style, that I do not believe a more competent judge could amend your poetry. I approve it so much, that if you commanded me to alter it, I would alter but one word, and would insert but one more. In the second stanza, for

Here ever *gleam'd* the patriot sword,

I would rather read

Here ever *flash'd,*

as I think *gleamed* not forcible enough for the thought, nor expressive enough of the vigorous ardour of your heroes. In the third stanza I think there wants a syllable, not literally, but to the ear:

And slavery with arts unblest.

Slavery, if pronounced as three syllables, does not satisfy the fullness of harmony; and, besides, obliges the tongue to dwell too strongly on *with,* which ought not to occupy much accent. An epithet to *arts* would make the whole line sonorous.

These are trifling criticisms of a trifling critic, but they mark both my attention and satisfaction with your ode. I must add, how beautifully is introduced *innocent of blood!* How ought that circumstance to be dwelt upon at the jubilee of the Revolution!

I will tell you how more than occasionally the mention of Pindar slipped into my pen. I have frequently, and even yesterday, wished that some attempt were made to ennoble our horse-races, particularly at Newmarket, by associating better arts with the courses; as, by contributing for odes, the best of which should be rewarded by medals. Our nobility would find their vanity gratified; for, as the pedigrees of their steeds would soon grow tiresome, their own genealogies would replace them; and, in the meantime, poetry and medals would be improved. Their Lordships would have judgement enough to know if their horse (which should be the impression on one side) were not well executed; and, as I hold that there is no being more difficult to draw well than a horse, no bad artist could be employed. Such a beginning would lead further; and the cup or plate for the prize might rise into beautiful verses.

But this is a vision; and I may as well go to bed and dream of anything else. I do not return the ode, which I flatter myself you meant I should keep.

P.S. I must not forget how difficult it is to write to a given tune, especially with so much ease as you have done; and nothing is more happy than making *November smile as May*.

2645. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 16, 1788.

Most true, Madam, neither my person nor age seem suited to be prominent on the hustings; but my long connection with Lord John's[1] grandmother[2], and thence with him, made it impossible for me to avoid contributing my vote; but I contrived so well, that I was in my own house again by twenty minutes after nine in the morning; and by choosing a Monday, before the mob had recovered their drunkenness of the Sabbath, there was much less crowd in the Garden[3] than on a common market-day. A week later, and I must have been carried on a chairman's horse—an exhibition I should have excused myself: in a word, I have been confined a fortnight by the gout in my left arm, hand, and knee, and cannot yet put on a coat. Having had two fits in the winter, I expected nothing less than a third; now I find that there are three tyrants against whom no prescription holds, and I shall add to that righteous maxim of the lawyers, *Nullum tempus occurrit regi, et ecclesiae, et podagrae*: however long ago, however lately they have signed a release, they can re-enter on the premises and take possession.

Letter 2645.—[1] Lord John Townshend, elected for Westminster on Aug. 4, 1788.

[2] Ethelreda Harrison, Viscountess Townshend, who died in March 1788.

[3] Covent Garden.

Mr. Selwyn, I do not doubt, is superlatively happy. I am curious to know what relics he has gleaned from the royal visit, that he can *bottle* up and place in his *sanctum sanctorum*. Peter Pindar, probably, has collected other droppings. Apropos, Madam, have you seen the two volumes of extracts from the letters of the Regent's mother to Queen Caroline? They will entertain you exceedingly, and I have no doubt of their authenticity. I know these royal dames gossiped together; and Madame d'Orléans was so careless, that one of our Queen's letters got into the Utrecht *Gazette* at the time, and contained an intrigue of one of her Women of the Bedchamber.

The Selwyn I do not expect soon at Richmond, for the Carlisles are going to Cheltenham; but so many loadstones draw him, that I, who have no attraction, seldom see him. In truth I wonder your Ladyship has patience with me as a correspondent, for it is difficult to be one of this world less than I am. Fontenelle and others have made the dead converse, but you *hold a talk* with a Strulbrug, who is not half so good company; nay, I should scarce have been taken notice of at the election, unless it was supposed that it was my ghost that appeared, and consequently I shall be charged as one of Lord John's bad votes; and Mr. Samuel Martin[4] would be ready to swear to my non-existence—he who, I have good reason to think, above a dozen years ago, bribed my own gardener, when I was very ill in London, to go to town and insist upon *seeing* me. As, at least, then I was alive, I was so ill-natured as to give him ocular proof. In another illness, when his hopes were again raised, he sent to my deputy, and threatened to turn him out, should I fail, if he did not inform him of the true worth of my office. I made an epigram on the occasion, in which I offered

[4] Martin had the reversion of Horace Walpole's place in the Exchequer.

to satisfy him myself, except by dying. I forget all but the two last lines:

——But as I love not target[5], meat, or wine,
Ask me whate'er you will—except to dine.

But I think my living to the length of an epic poem is more severe than any distich; and I do not believe there is an archbishop in England that would not willingly be so uncharitable as to live to the age of Methusalem, if he knew who was to be his successor.

Are not you diverted, Madam, with the nonplus of Cæsar and Semiramis? To be beaten at her own door by a pert little Swede[6], when she was preparing to be crowned in Santa Sophia: what if she should be overturned as Pindarically as she was exalted! I have an instance of a deposed sovereign in my neighbourhood, of a very different character, the late Queen of Pennsylvania. Lady Juliana Penn[7], once mistress of a revenue of 36,000*l.* a year, is now lodging modestly, humbly, and tranquilly at Petersham on 600*l.* a year; and her mind is so reconciled to her fortune, that she is still very handsome. She is to breakfast here soon, and I shall think Matson was not more honoured.

2646. To Miss Hannah More.

Dear Madam, Strawberry Hill, Aug. 17, 1788.

I am unwilling to write letters, whenever I have no present topic to occupy me but my own disorder, which being chronical and rarely dangerous, I do not choose to

[5] Alluding to the practice at a target in which Martin engaged before challenging Wilkes.

[6] Walpole probably refers to the naval action between the Swedes and Russians which took place on July 17, 1788, off the island of Hogland, in the Gulf of Finland.

[7] Fourth daughter of first Earl of Pomfret, and wife of Thomas Penn, formerly one of the proprietors of the province of Pennsylvania.

Letter 2646.—Incomplete in C.; printed from *Memoirs of Mrs. H. More*, 2nd ed., 1834, vol. ii. pp. 117-9.

fatigue my correspondents with it. If Mrs. Dickenson has answered a very pleasant letter she showed me from you above a week ago, she will probably have told you that I am confined again by the gout in my left arm and hand; it is going off, and I hope to be at liberty in two or three days. I judge with great pleasure by your letters that you are quite recovered of your winter's illness.

Miss —— has left Richmond; perhaps they have not told you that it is to humour the caprice of the poor mad sister, who sent for her, I believe, very unnecessarily; and she is too good not to sacrifice her own enjoyments and peace to what she thinks her duty. Our other poor friend [1] grows dreadfully worse, that is, violent and untractable; so that if they could have company, I fear it will soon not be decent to admit them; but I am afflicting your tender mind to no purpose. I had better have talked of my own gout, which is no great calamity.

In this great discovery of a new mine of Madame de Sévigné's letters, my faith, I confess, is not quite firm. Do people sell houses wholesale without opening their cupboards? This age, too, deals so much in false coinage, that booksellers and Birmingham give equal vent to what is not sterling; with the only difference, that the shillings of the latter pretend that the names are effaced, while the wares of the former pass under borrowed names. Have not we seen, besides all the *Testamens Politiques*, the spurious letters of Ninon de l'Enclos, of Pope Ganganelli, and the Memoirs of the Princess Palatine? This is a little mortifying, while we know that there actually exists at Naples a whole library of genuine Greek and Latin authors; most of whom, probably, have never been in print; and where, it is not unnatural to suppose, the works of some classics, yet lost, may be in being, and the remainder of some of the

[1] Mrs. Vesey.

best. Yet, at the rate in which they proceed to unroll, it would take as many centuries to bring them to light, as have elapsed since they were overwhelmed. Nay, another eruption of Vesuvius may return all the volumes to chaos! Omar is stigmatized for burning the library of Alexandria—is the King of Naples less a Turk? Is not it almost as unconscientious to keep a seraglio of virgin authors under the custody of nurses, as of blooming Circassians? Consider, my dear Madam, I am past seventy, or I should not be so ungallant as to make the smallest comparison between the contents of the two harems. Your picture, which hangs near my elbow, would frown, I am sure, if I had any light meaning.

Adieu, my dear Madam!

I am most cordially yours,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2647. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 6, 1788.

I AM not apt to boast, Madam; yet, considering that I have had three legal fits of the gout in eight months, I am as much a Hercules again as a gentleman cut out of paper can be. Nay, I have been to Park Place on a pilgrimage to little Master Stonehenge, *alias* the Druids' temple from Jersey, which is now erected on the back of an eminent hill, with two wings of fir-groves at small distances, and is seen from the garden over a long ridge of firs that shoot up from the side of the beautiful descending valley. Every morsel of stone that formed the circle originally is placed to an inch in its primitive position; and though the whole is diminutive, yet being seen on the horizon, it looks very high-priestly, and in that broken country may easily be taken for respectable ruins of an

ancient castle, or Caractacus's own summer residence. Park Place is now one of the spots the most deserving to be visited in our island; for, besides the variety of the ground, the diversity of the landscapes and prospects, all glittering with meanders of the Thames at a distance, or washed by it as it borders the shores, what singular objects are to be seen there!—the rocky bridge, the Druidic temple, Lady Aylesbury's worked pictures, and Henley Bridge, with Mrs. Damer's colossal heads of the Thame and Isis. In short, Park Place would not have been an unworthy codicil to Lady Anne's tour, though two of my favourites, the historic castle of Warwick, and the pretty appendix to history, Matson, were delightful ingredients of it. Methinks the loyalty of the master of the latter was not displayed with the judgement of an old courtier, especially as I believe his own sentiments were as little in harmony with what he left and what he removed as with his sovereign's.

Ragley is superb—that is, the situation, and the dimensions of the house, but has nothing else to occupy or detain one a moment. I remember, when I was at Matson, the poor mad gentlewoman who made an aviary of the cathedral, in hopes that the soul of her only daughter would come and pick some seeds in the shape of a robin-redbreast; panes were left void of glass in the windows, lest the ghostly dicky-birds should cut their feet, and pans of seeds were dispersed around, and constant feasts made, as if Bel and the Dragon were come to breakfast; but the chapter found their account, for the metempsychosian gentlewoman new-paved the tabernacle, and painted and whitewashed, so no church or cage was ever kept more snug.

I allow your Ladyship's observations on the Duchess of Orléans, and own she often censures Mad. de Maintenon in the wrong place; and certainly knew no more than she

could not help knowing; but most of those traits are very characteristic, and I firmly believe her, for her sincerity on her own homeliness and ugly hands show her frank love of truth as far as it came within her reach. I have since been reading in the *Esprit des Journaux* an account of a late Bishop of Amiens, who was a saint, and yet had a great deal of wit. A lady went to consult him whether she might wear rouge: she had been with several *directeurs*, but some were so severe, and some so relaxed, that she could not satisfy her conscience, and therefore was come to Monseigneur to decide for her, and would rest by his sentence. 'I see, Madam,' said the good prelate, 'what the case is: some of your casuists forbid rouge totally; others will permit you to wear as much as you please. Now, for my part, I love a medium in all things, and therefore I permit you to wear *rouge* on one cheek only.'

I cannot say there will be quite so much wit in the anecdote I am going to tell you next. Lady Greenwich t'other day, in a conversation with Lady Tweeddale, named the Saxons (the Lord knows how that happened). 'The Saxons, my dear!' cried the Marchioness, 'who were they?' 'Lord, Madam, did your Ladyship never read the History of England?' 'No, my dear; pray who wrote it?' Don't it put you in mind of Matta and the Allobroges in Grammont[1]? *Voici* a second dialogue of the same dame

LETTER 2647.—[1] An allusion to a conversation which took place at Turin between the Marquis de Sénantes and a gentleman named Matta: 'Sénantes . . . voyant que la conversation tombait d'abord qu'on ne buvait plus, après deux ou trois santés de part et d'autre, . . . voulut faire une seconde tentative, et provoquer Matta par son fort, c'est-à-dire du côté de l'érudition.

'Il le pria donc de lui dire en quel temps il croyait que les Allobroges fussent venus s'établir dans le Piémont. Matta, qui le donnait au diable avec ses Allobroges, lui dit qu'il fallait que ce fût du temps des guerres civiles. "J'en doute, dit l'autre.—Tant qu'il vous plaira, dit Matta.—Sous quel consulat? poursuivit Sénantes. . . .—Sous celui de la Ligue, quand les Guises firent venir les lansquenets en France, dit Matta." Mais que diable cela fait-il?' (*Mémoires de Grammont*, ed. 1851, p. 47.)

with the Duchess of Argyll, who went to her to hire a house the Marchioness has here on Twickenham Common, for her brother General Gunning.

Marchioness.—But will he pay me for it?

Duchess.—Madam, my brother can afford to pay for it; and if he cannot, I can.

Marchioness.—Oh, I am glad I shall have my money—well, my dear, but am I to wish you joy on Lady Augusta's marriage?

Duchess.—No great joy, Madam: there was no great occasion for Lady Augusta Campbell[2] to be married.

Marchioness.—Lord, my dear, I wonder to hear *you* say so, who have been married twice.

You say, Madam, you send me trash—pray, what do I send in return?—but you must recollect that I know no more than the Duchess of Orléans. However, as I have some paper left, if my packet is stuffed with trumpery, at least it shall be full of it, and I will add one more story which Lady Onslow told me lately. Once, when her lord was absent for a fortnight, she invited an officer to keep her company, to the great scandal of a prudish lady her neighbour, and of whom she asked leave to carry him into her pew at church, which the other, though with marks of surprise and indignation, could not avoid permitting. Sunday came, and my Lady and the Major—yet, though the minister had begun the service, the prude could not help whispering Lady O., 'You did not tell me the Major had grey hair!'

Such is the lore, Madam, in which I am versed! Dowagers are the evergreens among which I am planted, and whence I can gather nothing *couleur de rose* to send you. Though we have young Princes to entertain the

[2] Eldest daughter of fifth Duke of Argyll; m. Lieutenant-General Henry Clavering.

young world with their amours and their buildings, I pass most of my elderly hours with no better company than myself, and live upon the remnant of my memory, which is not in the highest preservation. I am glad, however, to read in the newspapers, that the Archbishop of Sens[3] is removed in France, and Monsieur Necker reinstated. I know the former well, he was my dear old friend's nephew, and is the most ambitious man alive, and in time of less distress would have been a thorn in our side, whom he hates supremely. Necker, not being a Frenchman, and being a Protestant, cannot be our personal foe; and from his profession and habitudes, and, above all, having no chance of remaining in power, but by attempting to restore their finances, war is the last instrument he will employ.

'Peace is my dear delight, not Fleury's more,' nor his compeer's, my father. I am glad that those gigantic incendiaries, the Russian Empress and Austrian Emperor, are so hampered, disappointed, mortified; nay, I prefer to them even the whore of Babylon and Pagan Turks, who were living quietly and honestly on the cheats and robberies of their predecessors and forefathers, and disturbed nobody. Good night! Madam, when you are tired of my village tales, you may easily check me: they are welcome to die where they sprung.

2648. To the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 12, 1788.

My late fit of gout, though very short, was a very authentic one, my dear Lord, and the third I have had since Christmas. Still, of late years, I have suffered so little pain, that I can justly complain of nothing but the confinement, and the

[3] Loménie de Brienne, Archbishop of Sens, nephew of Madame du Deffand.

debility of my hands and feet, which, however, I can still use to a certain degree; and as I enjoy such good spirits and health in the intervals, I look upon the gout as no enemy; yet I know it is like the compacts said to be made with the devil (no kind comparison to a friend!), who showers his favours on the contractors, but is sure to seize and carry them off at last.

I would not say so much of myself, but in return to your Lordship's obliging concern for me: yet, insignificant as the subject, I have no better in bank; and if I plume myself on the tolerable state of my outward man, I doubt your Lordship finds that age does not treat my interior so mildly as the gout does the other. If my letters, as you are pleased to say, used to amuse you, you must perceive how insipid they are grown, both from my decays and from the little intercourse I have with the world. Nay, I take care not to aim at false vivacity: what do the attempts of age at liveliness prove but its weakness? What the *Spectator* said wittily, ought to be practised in sober sadness by old folks: when he was dull, he declared it was by design. So far, to be sure, we ought to observe it, as not to affect more spirits than we possess. To be purposely stupid would be forbidding our correspondents to continue the intercourse; and I am so happy in enjoying the honour of your Lordship's friendship, that I will be content (if you can be so) with my natural inanity, without studying to increase it.

I have been at Park Place, and assure your Lordship that the Druidic temple vastly more than answers my expectation. Small it is, no doubt, when you are within the enclosure, and but a chapel of ease to Stonehenge; but Mr. Conway has placed it with so much judgement, that it has a lofty effect, and infinitely more than it could have had if he had yielded to Mrs. Damer's and my opinion, who earnestly begged to have it placed within the enclosure of the home

grounds. It now stands on the ridge of the high hill without, backed by the horizon, and with a grove on each side at a little distance; and, being exalted beyond and above the range of firs that climb up the sides of the hill from the valley, wears all the appearance of an ancient castle, whose towers are only shattered, not destroyed; and devout as I am to old castles, and small taste as I have for the ruins of ages absolutely barbarous, it is impossible not to be pleased with so very rare an antiquity so absolutely perfect, and it is difficult to prevent visionary ideas from improving a prospect.

If, as Lady Anne Conolly told your Lordship, I have had a great deal of company, you must understand it of my house, not of me; for I have very little. Indeed, last Monday both my house and I were included. The Duke of York sent me word the night before that he would come and see it, and of course I had the honour of showing it myself. He said, and indeed it seemed so, that he was much pleased; at least, I had every reason to be satisfied; for I never saw any Prince more gracious and obliging, nor heard one utter more personally kind speeches.

I do not find that *her Grace* the Countess of Bristol's[1] will is really known yet. They talk of two wills—to be sure, in her double capacity; and they say she has made three coheiresses to her jewels, the Empress of Russia, Lady Salisbury, and the whore of Babylon. The first of those legatees, I am not sorry, is in a piteous scrape: I like the King of Sweden no better than I do her and the Emperor; but it is good that two destroyers should be punished by a third, and that two crocodiles should be gnawed by an insect. Thank God! *we* are not only at peace, but in full plenty—nay, and in full beauty too. Still better; though we have had rivers

LETTER 2648.—[1] The Duchess of Kingston. *Walpole.*—She died at Paris on Aug. 16, 1788.

of rain, it has not, contrary to all precedent, washed away our warm weather. September, a month I generally dislike for its irresolute mixture of warm and cold, has hitherto been peremptorily fine. The apple and walnut trees bend down with fruit, as in a poetic description of Paradise.

I am with great gratitude, my dear Lord,

Your Lordship's devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2649. To MISS HANNAH MORE.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 22, 1788.

I DON'T like to defraud you of your compassion, my good friend, profuse as you are of it. I really suffered scarce any pain at all from my last fit of gout. I have known several persons who think there is a dignity in complaining; and, if you ask how they do, reply, 'Well, I *am*—pretty well—to-day; but if you knew what I suffered *yesterday*!' Now, methinks nobody has a right to tax another for pity on what is past; and besides, complaint of what is over can only make the hearer glad you are in pain no longer. Yes, yes, my dear Madam, you generally place your pity so profitably, that you shall not waste a drop upon me, who ought rather to be congratulated on being so well at my age.

Much less shall I allow you to make apologies for your admirable and proper conduct towards your poor *protégée*. And now you have told me the behaviour of a certain great dame, I will confess to you that I have known it some months by accident—nay, and tried to repair it. I prevailed on Lady ——, who as readily undertook the commission, and told the Countess of her treatment of you. Alas, the answer was, 'It is too late; I have no money.' No, but she has, if she has a diamond left. I am indignant; yet, do you know, not at this duchess, or that countess, but at the

invention of ranks, and titles, and pre-eminence. I used to hate that king and t'other prince; but, alas! on reflection I find the censure ought to fall on human nature in general. They are made of the same stuff as we, and dare we say what we should be in their situation? Poor creatures! think how they are educated, or rather corrupted, early, how flattered! To be educated properly they should be led through hovels, and hospitals, and prisons. Instead of being reprimanded (and perhaps immediately after *sugar-plum'd*) for not learning their Latin or French grammar, they now and then should be kept fasting; and, if they cut their finger, should have no plaster till it festered. No part of a royal brat's memory, which is good enough, should be burthened but with the remembrance of human sufferings. In short, I fear our nature is so liable to be corrupted and perverted by greatness, rank, power, and wealth, that I am inclined to think that virtue is the compensation to the poor for the want of riches: nay, I am disposed to believe that the first footpad or highwayman had been a man of quality, or a prince, who could not bear having wasted his fortune, and was too lazy to work; for a beggar born would think labour a more natural way of getting a livelihood than venturing his life. I have something a similar opinion about common women. No modest girl thinks of many men, till she has been in love with *one*, been ruined by him, and abandoned. But to return to my theme, and it will fall heavy on yourself. Could the milkwoman have been so bad, if you had merely kept her from starving, instead of giving her opulence? The soil, I doubt, was bad; but it could not have produced the rank weed of ingratitude, if you had not dunged it with gold, which rises from rock, and seems to meet with a congenial bed when it falls on the human heart.

And so Dr. Warton imagines I am writing Walpoliana! No, in truth, nor anything else; nor shall—nor will I go

out in a jest-book. Age has not only made me prudent, but, luckily, lazy; and, without the latter extinguisher, I do not know but that farthing candle my discretion would let my snuff of life flit to the last sparkle of folly, like what children call the parson and clerk in a bit of burnt paper. You see by my *writability* in pressing my letters on you, that my pen has still a colt's tooth left, but I never indulge the poor old child with more paper than this small-sized sheet; I do not give it enough to make a paper kite and fly abroad on wings of booksellers. *You* ought to continue writing, for you do good by your writings, or at least mean it; and if a virtuous intention fails, it is a sort of coin, which, though thrown away, still makes the donor worth more than he was before he gave it away. I delight too in the temperature of your piety, and that you would not see the enthusiastic exorcist. How shocking to suppose that the Omnipotent Creator of worlds delegates his power to a momentary insect to eject supernatural spirits that he had permitted to infest another insect, and had permitted to vomit blasphemies against himself! Pray do not call *that* enthusiasm, but delirium. I pity real enthusiasts, but I would shave their heads and take away some blood. The exorcist's associates are in a worse predicament, I doubt, and hope to *make* enthusiasts. If such abominable impostors were not rather a subject of indignation, I could smile at the rivalship between them and the animal magnetists, who are inveigling fools into their different pales. And, alas! while folly has a shilling left, there will be enthusiasts and quack doctors; and there will be slaves while there are kings or sugar-planters. I have remarked that though Jesuits, &c., travel to distant east and west to propagate their religion and traffic, I never heard of one that made a journey into Asia or Africa to preach the doctrines of liberty, though those regions are so deplorably oppressed. Nay, I much doubt whether ever any

chaplain of the regiments we have sent to India has once whispered to a native of Bengal, that there are milder forms of government than those of his country. No; security of property is not a wholesome doctrine to be inculcated in a land where the soil produces diamonds and gold! In short, if your Bristol exorcist believes he can cast out devils, why does he not go to Leadenhall Street? There is a company whose name is legion.

By your *gambols*, as you call them, after the most ungambolling peeress[1] in Christendom, and by your jaunts, I conclude, to my great satisfaction, that you are quite well. Change of scene and air are good for your spirits; and September, like all our old ladies, has given itself May airs, and must have made your journey very pleasant. Yet you will be glad to get back to your Cowslip Green, though it may offer you nothing but Michaelmas daisies. When you do leave it, I wish you could persuade Mrs. Garrick to settle sooner in London. There is full as good hay to be made in town at Christmas as at Hampton, and some haymakers that will wish for you, particularly your most sincere friend, HOR. WALPOLE.

2650. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 24, 1788.

MERE answers, that are not made to letters immediately, are like good things that people recollect they might have said, if they had thought on them in time: that is, very insipid, and the apropos very probably forgotten; yet, as I have taken out my doctor's degree in insipidity, I shall not scruple acting in character, but shall reply to the items in your Ladyship's last, in as dull and downright a manner

LETTER 2649. — [1] The Dowager Duchess of Beaufort, a very stiff and stately personage.

as if I were of any of the learned professions, and were consulted by you.

The fragment of prologue you sent me I like much; the description of Dr. Johnson is very just; and for me, though I am numbered among the blue-stockings, my stockings are so very thin, that not a thread aches at the laugh at them.

The person you wish to be acquainted with, Madam, that you may question him on many particulars of his book, is a most worthy man, who would be very proud of the honour of being presented to your Ladyship, but I doubt whether you would admire him as much as his heroes. He is very grave, very circumstantial, and his visits are not epigrams; but then he lives at the end of the world, as you do at the beginning, and you would see him but seldom.

The flaming patriot that was willing to go to the devil to save country gentlemen from the weight of the land-tax, I should think was a Jacobite parson, who hated the Revolution, and had many disciples in the class of squires. There must have been something of the Church in such zeal; and I dare to say he thought there was a back door from hell into the vestry, by which he should escape and get absolution from some nonjuring brother. The patriots I have seen of later days have not been formed of such combustible ingredients. Oh no! *per contra*; and as Bossuet, I think, wrote against the Huguenots *L'Histoire des Variations*, a second part might be added on the civil variations of English Protestants or *Protesters*.

On the Duchess of Kingston I have nothing to say: I was weary of her folly and vanity long ago, and now look on her only as a big bubble that is burst.

New game, or village anecdotes, I have none to send you, Madam; nor from my own narrow circle, but that I have had a sort of *impromptu* visit from the Duke of York. He sent me word, one evening, that if I were alone he would

come with some company and see my house ; but it proving too late, he appointed the next day, and came. As I had never been presented to him, I asked leave at the door to kiss his hand, but he would not suffer it ; and indeed the whole time he stayed, which was about an hour, it was impossible to be more gracious, or to say more obliging things. His uncle, the late Duke, surprised me still more suddenly eight-and-twenty years ago. Two Dukes of York, at such a distance of time, make me seem to have lived till the same adventures come round again to me in different reigns. You must not wonder, Madam, if I give myself the airs of a patriarch, when I am so like Abraham, who at very distant periods had exactly the same incidents happen to him twice from two princes about his wife ; for Sarah's charms, it seems, remained in fashion as long as Strawberry's, though one should have thought that young princes would not have an appetite for anything so Gothic as either.

I have answered ; I have related ; and I have not a syllable more to say, but good night, my dear Lady.

P.S. In exchange for the prologue, Madam, I send you the inscription which the Council of Jersey sent over to General Conway with the Druidic temple :—

Pour des siècles caché aux regards des mortels
Cet ancien monument, ces pierres, ces autels,
Où le sang des humains offert en sacrifice
Ruissela pour des dieux, qu'enfanta le caprice ;
Ce monument, sans prix par son antiquité,
Témoignera pour nous à la postérité
Que dans tous les dangers Césarée eut un père,
Attentif et vaillant, généreux et prospère,
Et redira, Conway, aux siècles à venir,
Qu'en vertu du respect dû à ce souvenir,
Elle te fit ce don, acquis à ta vaillance,
Comme un juste tribut de sa reconnoissance.

2651. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 11, 1788.

I am sorry, Madam, that *mes villageoises* have no better provender than my *syllogisms* to send to their correspondents, nor am I ambitious of rivalling the barber or innkeeper, and becoming the wit of five miles round. I remember how, long ago, I estimated local renown at its just value by a sort of little adventure that I will tell you; and, since that, there is an admirable chapter somewhere in Voltaire which shows that more extended fame is but local on a little larger scale; it is the chapter of the Chinese who goes into a European bookseller's shop, and is amazed at finding none of the works of his most celebrated countrymen; while the bookseller finds the stranger equally ignorant of western classics.

Well, Madam, here is my tiny story: I went once with Mr. Rigby to see a window of painted glass at Messing, in Essex[1], and dined at a better sort of alehouse. The landlady waited on us and was notably loquacious, and entertained us with the *bons mots* and funny exploits of Mr. Charles; Mr. Charles said this, Mr. Charles played such a trick: oh, nothing was so pleasant as Mr. Charles. But how astonished the poor soul was when we asked who Mr. Charles was; and how much more astonished when she found we had never heard of Mr. Charles Luckyn, who, it seems, is a relation of Lord Grimston, had lived in their village, and been the George Selwyn of half a dozen cottages.

If I had a grain of ambitious pride left, it is what, in other respects, has been the thread that has run through my life, that of being forgotten; so true, except the folly

Letter 2651.—[1] See letter to Montagu of July 20, 1749.

of being an author, has been what I said last year to the Prince of Wales when he asked me if I was a Freemason. I replied, 'No, Sir; I never was anything.'

Apropos to the Prince; I am sorry you do not approve of my offering to kiss the Duke's hand when he came to see my house. I never had been presented to him; but, moreover, as I am very secure of never being suspected to pay my court for interest, and certainly never seek royal personages, I always pique myself, when thrown in their way, upon showing that I know I am nobody, and know the distance between them and me: this I take to be common sense, and do not repent of my behaviour. If I were a grandee and in place, I would not, like the late Duchess of Northumberland, jig after them, calling them my master and my mistress. I think, if I were their servant, I would as little, like the same Grace, parade before the Queen with more footmen than her Majesty. *That* was impertinent.

I am sorry, for the third time of this letter, that I have no new village anecdotes to send your Ladyship, since they divert you for a moment. I have one, but some months old. Lady Charleville, my neighbour, told me three months ago, that, having some company with her, one of them had been to see Strawberry. 'Pray,' said another, 'who is that Mr. Walpole?' 'Lord!' cried a third, 'don't you know the great epicure, Mr. Walpole?' 'Pho!' said the first, 'great epicure! you mean the antiquarian.' There, Madam, surely this anecdote may take its place in the chapter of local fame. If I have picked up no recent anecdotes on our Common, I have made a much more, to me, precious acquisition. It is the acquaintance of two young ladies of the name of Berry[2], whom I first

[2] Mary Berry (1763–Nov. 1852), and Agnes Berry (1764–Jan. 1852), daughters of Robert Berry (d. 1817) by a daughter of John Seton, of

saw last winter, and who accidentally took a house here with their father for this season. Their story is singular enough to entertain you. The grandfather[3], a Scot, had a large estate in his own country, 5,000*l.* a year it is said; and a circumstance I shall tell you makes it probable. The eldest son married, for love, a woman with no fortune. The old man was enraged and would not see him. The wife died and left these two young ladies. Their grandfather wished for an heir male, and pressed the widower to remarry, but could not prevail; the son declaring he would consecrate himself to his daughters and their education. The old man did not break with him again, but much worse, totally disinherited him, and left all to his second son, who very handsomely gave up 800*l.* a year to his elder brother. Mr. Berry has since carried his daughters for two or three years to France and Italy, and they are returned the best-informed and the most perfect creatures I ever saw at their age. They are exceedingly sensible, entirely natural and unaffected, frank, and, being qualified to talk on any subject, nothing is so easy and agreeable as their

Kirkbridge, Yorkshire. Horace Walpole's liking for the Miss Berrys soon developed into an affection to which his letters to them abundantly testify. He secured as much of their society as possible. They owed to him a position in society which they kept until the end of their days. It is stated, on the authority of Miss Berry's maid, who survived until 1896 or 1897, that Walpole offered his 'hand and heart' to Mary Berry and his 'hand and coronet' to Agnes Berry — doubtless with a view of securing their constant society.

In 1796 Miss Berry became engaged to General Charles O'Hara, Governor of Gibraltar, but the engagement was broken off in six months' time. The rest of the long lives of the two sisters was uneventful.

Horace Walpole left to the Miss Berrys a sum of money, and the house at Little Strawberry Hill which had been their country residence during his lifetime. Mary Berry edited Horace Walpole's *Works* (London, 1798, 5 vols. 4to), though the editorship is commonly attributed to her father, and the *Letters of the Marquise du Deffand to Horace Walpole* (London, 1810, 4 vols. 12mo).

[3] It was not Mr. Berry's father who disinherited him, but his maternal uncle, Mr. Ferguson, a successful Scotch merchant, who made a large fortune, and purchased the estate of Raith in Fifeshire.

conversation—not more apposite than their answers and observations. The eldest, I discovered by chance, understands Latin and is a perfect Frenchwoman in her language. The younger draws charmingly, and has copied admirably Lady Di's gipsies, which I lent, though for the first time of her attempting colours. They are of pleasing figures; Mary, the eldest, sweet, with fine dark eyes, that are very lively when she speaks, with a symmetry of face that is the more interesting from being pale; Agnes, the younger, has an agreeable sensible countenance, hardly to be called handsome, but almost. She is less animated than Mary, but seems, out of deference to her sister, to speak seldomer, for they dote on each other, and Mary is always praising her sister's talents. I must even tell you they dress within the bounds of fashion, though fashionably; but without the excrescences and balconies with which modern hoydens overwhelm and barricade their persons. In short, good sense, information, simplicity, and ease characterize the Berrys; and this is not particularly mine, who am apt to be prejudiced, but the universal voice of all who know them. The first night I met them I would not be acquainted with them, having heard so much in their praise that I concluded they would be all pretension. The second time, in a very small company, I sat next to Mary, and found her an angel both inside and out. Now I do not know which I like best, except Mary's face, which is formed for a sentimental novel, but is ten times fitter for a fifty times better thing, genteel comedy. This delightful family comes to me almost every Sunday evening, as our region is too *proclamatory* to play at cards on the seventh day. I do not care a straw for cards, but I do disapprove of this partiality to the youngest child of the week; while the other poor six days are treated as if they had no souls to save. I forgot to tell you that Mr. Berry is a little merry man with a round face, and you

would not suspect him of so much feeling and attachment. I make no excuse for such minute details; for, if your Ladyship insists on hearing the humours of my district, you must for once indulge me with sending you two pearls that I found in my path.

2652. To Miss Mary Berry.

Oct. 14, 1788.

I will certainly not contend when I am so glad to be *foiled*, as I am in every sense of the word; for you perceive my ambition is to *set you off*; and since *clinquant* is of no other use, and as Strawberry *Hill* is the lowest in all the parish of Parnassus, I hope you will allow me the honour of being your *Phébus en titre d'office*; though I shall be the reverse of all deputies, for my charge will be a sinecure, as my principal, the true inspirer, will, I am persuaded, always execute his office himself, and leave on the superannuated list,

Your devoted humble servant,

H. Walpole.

2653. To John Pinkerton.

Dear Sir, Strawberry Hill, Oct. 15, 1788.

I am rather sorry to hear that you are going to be the editor of *another's* work, who are so infinitely better employed when composing yourself: however, as it will be on a branch of *virtù* that I love, I comfort myself, from your taste and accuracy, that it will be better executed than by any one else.

I will execute your commissions, but you must give me

Letter 2652.—Not in C.; now printed from original in possession of Earl Waldegrave.

a little time. The gout has lamed my fingers, and I cannot use them much at a time; and I doubt it has made me a little indolent too. Age, you may be sure, has not improved my sight, and Vertue's MSS. are not only a heap of immethodic confusion, but are written in so very diminutive a hand that, many years ago, when I collected my *Anecdotes* from them, and had very strong eyes, I was often forced to use a magnifying-glass. Should you be impatient, will you come and search those MSS. yourself? Next, will you come next Sunday hither, and pass the whole day, if you please, in the examination?

I do not recollect *three* medals of my father. One I think was struck by Natter, who was much patronized by my brother, Sir Edward, and who also engraved two or three seals of Sir Robert's head. The consular figure on the reverse of the medal I mean was intended for Cicero; but I believe was copied from a statue belonging to the late Earl of Leicester at Holkham, and which, if I do not mistake at this distance of time, is called Lucius Antonius. I do not know that any medal of my father was struck on any particular occasion. *That* I mention and Dassier's were honorary, as of a considerable person; and his being Prime Minister might have a little share in the compliment. Of Dassier [1] I know no more than I have said in the *Anecdotes of Painting.*

I am ignorant who has the medal of the Duchess of Portsmouth; perhaps you might learn of Mr. Bindley, Commissioner of Excise, and who lives in Somerset House. He had a great collection of modern medals, but sold them. Perhaps the Duke of Devonshire has the medal in question:

LETTER 2653.—[1] Jacques Antoine Dassier (1715 – 1759), a Genevese, assistant engraver to the English Mint. His medal of Sir Robert Walpole was one of a series of portrait medals of distinguished Englishmen. It was struck in 1744.

you might learn of Dr. Lort, or I can ask him. Are there no modern medals in Dr. Hunter's collection?

These are all the answers I am ready to give to your queries at present.

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2654. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 19, 1788.

IT stands me upon, Madam, to hurry my answer, when I have to thank you for your very pretty and very flattering poetry. Little did I think that my two Straw Berries would prove Muses at Farming Woods. I sent your Ladyship an account of them from absolute dearth of subjects, when you had commanded me to write again, and when I had done so, I repented, and thought you would laugh at me in your mind's mouth, for troubling you with an idle description of two girls with whom I have happened to get acquainted. Luckily, your Ladyship and our Lord were, at that moment, full as much a man and woman of the woods as any Marquis[1] in Christendom; and, as you are there still, I shall venture to proceed, and send you, not an adequate return (as far as my part goes) for your verses, but some of *les amusemens des eaux de Strawberri*; but beseech that they may go no farther, for trifles that *égayent* a little private society, are ridiculous if they get abroad, especially from a septuagenary rhymer.

The Berrys were to come and see my printing-press. I recollected my gallantry of former days, and they found these stanzas ready set:—

LETTER 2654.—[1] The Marquis of Lansdowne; see letter to Lady Ossory of Sept. 28, 1786.

To Mary's lips has ancient Rome
  Her purest language taught,
And from the modern city home
  Agnes its pencil brought.

Rome's ancient Horace sweetly chants
  Such maids with lyric fire;
Albion's old Horace sings nor paints—
  He only can admire.

Still would his press their fame record,
  So amiable the pair is!
But, ah! how vain to think his word
  Can add a straw to Berrys!

The next morning the Latian nymph sent me these lines:—

Had Rome's famed Horace thus addrest
  His Lydia or his Lyce,
He had ne'er so oft complain'd their breast
  To him was cold and icy.

But had they sought their joy to explain,
  Or praise their generous bard,
Perhaps, like me, they had tried in vain,
  And felt the task too hard.

I will now quit my pretty natural new acquaintance, to utter my wonder (for wonder I do at this novel *équipée*, though accustomed to so many of her vagaries) of a former poetic *connoissance*, Lady C——[2]. One is apt to cry, on hearing any eccentric exploit, 'Oh, she is mad!' but surely the packet to Blenheim, and the *two* proposals, considering all circumstances, were produced by the full of the moon. Indeed, these *coups de lune* come thick and fast. But last week another of her projects came to my knowledge; I do not think myself at liberty to mention it yet, though it will be no secret; but you will allow, Madam, that *I* have good

[2] Probably Lady Craven.

reason not to be the first to divulge it. When you hear it, I will tell you more concerning it.

Lady Tweeddale, between fondness and enormous thrift, really did starve her children; but she is strangely foolish, and then what can one say more?

George[3] is returned to Richmond, and diverted me prodigiously. I had foretold that he would bottle up some relict from the royal visit, but, as he has more wit than I have prophetic spirit, his label to a certain *patera* of *La Reine boit* far outwent my imagination; I suppose he told it to Lord Ossory, or showed it to him.

I have been entertained, too, by a visit of Lord Leicester to Penshurst, from Tunbridge. As the former had belonged to usurpers of his title, of which he had been wronged from the era of the Conquest, I should not have thought he would have deigned to enter it. Oh, but he did; ay, and fell in love with, and wants to purchase it. In the mansion he found a helmet, and put it on, but, unfortunately, it had been made for some paladin whose head was not of the exact standard that a genuine Earl of Leicester's should be, and in doffing it he almost tore one of his ears off. I am persuaded he tried it with the intention of wearing it at the next coronation, for, when he was but two-and-twenty, he called on me one morning, and told me he proposed to claim the championry of England, being descended from the eldest daughter of Ralph de Basset, who was champion before the Flood, or before the Conquest, I forget which, whereas the Dymocks come only from the second, and he added, 'I did put in my claim at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth.' A gentleman who was with me, and who did not understand the heraldic tongue, hearing such a declaration from a very young man, stared, and thought he was

[3] George Selwyn.

gone raving mad, and I, who did understand him, am still not clear that the gentleman was in the wrong.

As you allow me to fill my letters with any scraps I can amass, I will tell your Ladyship how I was struck lately by a sentence of a negro. I was at Kingston, with the sisters of Lord Milford, who are my relations, and who have lately lost their very aged mother. They have a favourite black, who has lived with them a great many years, and is remarkably sensible. To amuse Lady Phillips under a long illness, they had read to her the account of the Pelew Islands. Somebody happened to say we were sending, or have just sent, a ship thither; the black, who was in the room, exclaimed, 'Then there is an end of their happiness!' What a satire on Europe!

Apropos to scraps and fragments, Madam; part of the *Mémoires de St. Simon*, which I have long thirsted to see, is published, but has not yet arrived here. Mrs. Damer could get but one copy at Paris, and I have only had a glimpse of one volume out of three, but, even there, I found at least two of Voltaire's most remarkable anecdotes.

The Duc de St. Simon was a favourite of the Regent, but dying, his *Mémoires* were seized, and locked up at Versailles in the *dépôt de papiers*. The Duc de Choiseul, *qui osoit tout*, had a copy taken, and the Duchess lent it to Madame du Deffand, who made her promise I should see it at my next visit; but the Duc's fall intervened, and Madame de Grammont[4] persuaded him it would be dangerous to let it be known then that he had a copy, and I could not blame her. Since that, the Duchesse d'Anville saw, probably, the same copy, and made extracts, as others have from that or the original. I am not sure that the whole is public, or will be, but a good deal is something. Finis of my scraps and paper.

[4] The sister of the Duc de Choiseul.

2655. To Thomas Holcroft[1].

Berkeley Square, Nov. 28, 1788.

The civilities, Sir, which you are pleased to say you received from me at Strawberry Hill, were no more than were due to any gentleman, and certainly did not deserve such acknowledgement as you have made; and I should be ashamed of your thanking me so much, if the agreeable manner in which you have greatly overpaid them by the present of your works did not make me easily swallow my shame, though it will not dispense me from assuring you how much I am obliged to you. I shall read them with pleasure as soon as I am settled in town. Just at present, I live between town and country, and should not have leisure but to read them by snatches.

It is for this reason that if you are not in haste for it, I shall beg leave to keep your MS. comedy till I can peruse it with proper attention. If you should want it soon, I will return it and ask for it again, for it would be unjust to the merit of your works to run through them too rapidly.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged and

Obedient humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

2656. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 3, 1788.

I came to town but yesterday at two o'clock, Madam, when I found your Ladyship's letter. I would have answered it directly, but so many persons came in, it was impossible.

Letter 2655.—Collated with original in possession of Mr. G. Beresford Fitzgerald.

[1] The dramatist; d. 1809.

You attributed my late silence, Madam, to the right, at least to the chief cause. Madness[1] is too unpleasant a subject to me who have undergone so much from it in my nephew's case. I heartily pity all afflicted with, or related to it.

It was, besides, too serious a topic to handle, especially under such perfect ignorance as mine. I have not been in town but once or twice for a night or two. At Twickenham I could hear nothing but the strangest incoherent accounts. When here, the assertions were more positive, yet only more discordant; and I saw nobody whose authority I could think better than from second or third hands: and I did not choose to invalidate them more, as I should do by even repeating them and removing them still farther from a source that might not be pure.

Things now draw to a crisis, and every point will be public, worth knowing certainly, for the events will concern everybody, and indifference would be affected at a moment so new. I, though so old, and as little interested as any individual can be, do not pretend to be incurious. Every *eighty-eight* seems to be a favourite period with fate; and when the club that had recourse to Queen Elizabeth's '88 chose to go two hundred years back for a companion to the Revolution, they little thought that if they had waited a month they would have an era of their own to the purpose.

With such food for reflection or anticipation, one can be in no want of matter: but I am too ancient to tap what may almost be called a new reign, and of which I am not

LETTER 2656.—[1] An allusion to the King's insanity, of which symptoms first appeared in Oct. 1788. Previous to the date of this letter George III had been placed under the care of Dr. Willis, who declared himself convinced that the King would soon recover. In the meantime it became necessary to find out how the government was to be carried on during the King's illness. Fox declared in favour of the Prince of Wales' inherent right to the regency. Pitt, on the other hand, maintained that the regency should be settled by Parliament.

likely to see much. To penetration I never pretended; nor, to say truth, much believe in, for this reason—the more intuitive any man's head, the wiser he is deemed: now a wise man only calculates from probabilities; he does not condescend (nor would be the shrewder for it) to estimate chance and follies, which decide oftener than probability does. My foresight, if I give it the rein, would not prognosticate much felicity to the nation from so unexpected a calamity, because I should not take uncertainty for a stable of foundation, and hopes and fears do not form an horizon of tranquillity. *Interregnums* have seldom produced halcyon days; yet I no more depend on historic precedent than I do on sagacious foresight. I do not know that there is a grain of good sense in all the labyrinth of speculation in which I could wander, except in my steady opinion of our being exceedingly fortunate in the present embarrassed situation of France. Monsieur Necker may, for aught I know, be a dexterous financier—but he is no Richelieu—though no bad politician neither, as far as confounding goes, for the roll of questions he proposed to the notables seems to have thrown open the gates to endless controversy and disputation, and to mean to set all the provinces, all their towns, all the nobility, clergy, and people together by the ears, before they can settle who shall be *les États*; and thus he may convert a rebellion into a civil war, which may save the prerogative at the expense of the revenue, which one should have thought would rather have been his object to procure and settle. That is his affair—it is ours, whichever way they are embroiled. To me it is private comfort, that all the Machiavels and Machiavellesses of the present age, who have sown war, have only reaped perplexity, disgrace, and discomfiture. France *bouleversed* Holland and was foiled: Cæsar[2] has been baffled by the Turks he despised:

[2] The Emperor Joseph II.

Semiramis[3] has drawn Sweden and Poland on her shoulders: and Sweden is in danger at home. *Tant mieux, tant mieux.*

Lord Ossory, no doubt, will come, Madam, and satisfy your curiosity, if you can be content to wait for the echo, which would surprise me. One always thinks, when reading of any memorable period, how one should like to have lived at the time. Surely so novel a crisis as the present is of that complexion. Even if we are temperate, it will be a singular moment. It certainly is a grave one!

2657. To Lady Craven.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 11, 1788.

It is agreeable to your Ladyship's usual goodness to honour me with another letter; and I may say, to your equity too, after I had proved to Monsieur Mercier[1], by the list of dates of my letters, that it was not mine, but the post's fault, that you did not receive one that I had the honour of writing to you above a year ago. Not, Madam, that I could wonder if you had the prudence to drop a correspondence with an old superannuated man; who, conscious of his decay, has had the decency of not troubling with his dotages persons of not near your Ladyship's youth and vivacity. I have long been of opinion that few persons know *when* to die; I am not so English as to mean when to dispatch themselves—no, but when to go out of the world. I have usually applied this opinion to those who have made a considerable figure; and, consequently, it was not adapted to myself. Yet even we ciphers ought not to fatigue the public scene when we are become lumber. Thus, being quite out of the question, I will explain my maxim, which is the more wholesome, the higher it is

[3] The Empress of Russia.

Letter 2657. — [1] A Frenchman chosen by Lady Craven as secretary to her proposed Society of Arts and Sciences at Anspach.

addressed. My opinion, then, is, that when any personage has shone as much as is possible in his or her best walk (and, not to repeat both genders every minute, I will use the male as the common of the two), he should take up his Strulbrugism, and be heard of no more. Instances will be still more explanatory. Voltaire ought to have pretended to die after *Alzire*, *Mahomet*, and *Semiramis*, and not have produced his wretched last pieces: Lord Chatham should have closed his political career with his immortal war: and how weak was Garrick, when he had quitted the stage, to limp after the tatters of fame by writing and reading pitiful poems; and even by *sitting* to read plays which he had acted with such fire and energy! We have another example in Mr. Anstey; who, if he had a friend upon earth, would have been obliged to him for being knocked on the head, the moment he had published the *first* edition of the *Bath Guide*; for, even in the second, he had exhausted his whole stock of inspiration, and has never written anything tolerable since. When such unequal authors print their works together, one may apply in a new light the old hacked simile of Mezentius, who tied together the living and the dead.

We have just received the works of an author, from whom I find I am to receive much less entertainment than I expected, because I shall have much less to read than I intended. His *Memoirs*, I am told, are almost wholly military; which, therefore, I shall not read: and his poetry, I am sure, I shall not look at, because I should not understand it. What I saw of it formerly convinced me that he would not have been a poet, even if he had written in his own language; and, though I do not understand German, I am told it is a fine language: and I can easily believe that any tongue (not excepting our old barbarous Saxon, which, a bit of an antiquary as I am, I abhor) is

more harmonious than French. It was curious absurdity, therefore, to pitch on the most unpoetic language in Europe, the most barren, and the most clogged with difficulties. I have heard Russian and Polish sung, and both sounded musical; but, to abandon one's own tongue, and not adopt Italian, that is even sweeter, and softer, and more copious than the Latin, was a want of taste that I should think could not be applauded even by a Frenchman born in Provence. But what a language is the French, which measures verses by feet that never are to be pronounced; which is the case wherever the mute *e* is found! What poverty of various sounds for rhyme, when, lest similar cadences should too often occur, their mechanic bards are obliged to marry masculine and feminine terminations as alternately as the black and white squares of a chess-board? Nay, will you believe me, Madam—yes, you will, for you may convince your own eyes—that a scene of *Zaïre* begins with three of the most nasal adverbs that ever snorted together in a breath? *Enfin, donc, désormais,* are the culprits in question. *Enfin donc,* need I tell your Ladyship that the author I alluded to at the beginning of this long tirade is the late King of Prussia?

I am conscious that I have taken a little liberty when I excommunicate a tongue in which your Ladyship has condescended to write; but I only condemn it for verse and pieces of eloquence, of which I thought it alike incapable, till I read Rousseau of Geneva. It is a most sociable language, and charming for narrative and epistles. Yet, write as well as you will in it, you must be liable to express yourself better in the speech natural to you; and your own country has a right to understand all your works, and is jealous of their not being as perfect as you could make them. Is it not more creditable to be translated into a foreign language than into your own? and will it not

vex you to hear the translation taken for the original, and to find vulgarisms that you could not have committed yourself? But I have done, and will release you, Madam; only observing, that you flatter me with a vain hope, when you tell me you shall return to England some time or other. Where will that time be for me? and when it arrives, shall I not be somewhere else?

I do not pretend to send your Ladyship English news, nor to tell you of English literature. You must before this time have heard of the dismal state into which our chief personage[2] is fallen! That consideration absorbs all others. The two Houses are going to settle some intermediate succedaneum; and *the obvious one*[3], no doubt, will be fixed on.

This letter, I hope, will be more fortunate than my last. I should be very unhappy to seem again ungrateful, when I have the honour of being with the greatest respect,

Madam, your Ladyship's most obliged
And most humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

2658. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 26, 1788.

I MUST have been very presumptuous, Madam, had I expected your Ladyship to bestow on me any minutes of the very few hours you passed in town—indeed I was not so unreasonable. Your dentist, I hope, was successfully employed.

I am by no means expert, Madam, at explaining obscurities. The passage you have sent me is probably incorrectly printed, if not too carelessly written. It perhaps alludes to Mahomet's first wife, Cadesha, who became a proselyte to his revelations, and propagated his gospel. She certainly

[2] The King. [3] The Prince of Wales.

bore to him none but allegoric progeny. Or may *the she-wolf* mean Mahomet's own enthusiasm? I only guess because you bid me—not from ambition of making sense out of what I do not understand.

I have been confined to my house for some days by the worst cold and cough I ever had in my days. I treat it as ill as possible, and do not give it a morsel; still it will not leave me. In revenge it will not let me speak. My whole amusement, a woful one, has been dipping into three volumes of the King of Prussia's Letters to Voltaire. Worse stuff did I never behold! so pedantic, so tiresomely flattering, so utterly void of variety, with Apollon, Milton, and Newton in every page, and such bushels of vile verses—oh, I borrowed and shall return them. It is to be hoped his *Memoirs* will make amends—but General Conway is reading them himself, and could only lend me the correspondence.

Lord Beauchamp has just called on me, and says the King of Spain is dead[1]. I should be as glad to read his letters as those of his *soi-disant Philosophe de Sans-Souci*. What contradictions are we, great mortals and little! To be the rival of Alexander, and the *singe* of the Marquis d'Argens[2] and French academicians!

I will not plead my cold for the shortness of this, Madam, yet I assure you it makes it troublesome even to write; but I really know nothing more than I have told you, not even of politics (which you choose to avoid), and which I never seek, and a dispute full as little on any subject. Politics are to me but objects of entertainment in their turn, like other transient occurrences; but serious follies if they affect the good humour of the person noways

LETTER 2658.—[1] Charles III, who died on Dec. 14, 1788.

[2] Jean-Baptiste de Boyer (1704-1771), Marquis d'Argens, *littérateur*. He was for some time Chamberlain to Frederick the Great.

concerned in them. It would be droll indeed if your Ladyship and I should grow warm about them.

2659. To Miss Mary Berry.

I am *sorry*, in the sense of that word before it meant, like a Hebrew word, *glad* or *sorry*, that I am engaged this evening; and I am at your command on Tuesday, as it is always my inclination to be. It is a misfortune that words are become so much the current coin of society, that, like King William's shillings, they have no impression left; they are so smooth, that they mark no more to whom they first belonged than to whom they do belong, and are not worth even the twelvepence into which they may be changed: but if they mean too little, they may seem to mean too much too, especially when an old man (who is often synonymous for a miser) parts with them. I am afraid of protesting how much I delight in your society, lest I should seem to affect being gallant; but if two negatives make an affirmative, why may not two ridicules compose one piece of sense? and therefore, as I am in love with you both, I trust it is a proof of the good sense of your devoted

Feb. 2nd, 17—and 71[1]. H. Walpole.

2660. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 6, 1789.

I am sure, Madam, the various reasons of my silence will appear valid to you. For six weeks I was confined by the worst cold and cough that I ever had in my life, and so shattered and oppressed, that I suspected the latter at least would fix for its life and mine, like an owl that resides and

Letter 2659.—[1] An allusion to Horace Walpole's own age at this time.

hoots in an old ruin—but it is gone. Then came the misfortune of Miss Campbell's death[1], and I was shut up with Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury. He bore it the worst of the two at first, but has conquered himself; and she is better within these two days.

For news I heard not a tittle but political, and Œdipus himself could not have guessed what was true. Everybody that called on me asserted something or other on *the best authority*, and every other body that came contradicted his predecessor as positively on as good authority; and so between two stools my faith remained just where it was. Thus I could not report anything that was *party per pale*, truth and falsehood, when I could not blazon either in its true colours—were all these embargoes not sufficient? would not you yourself, Madam, impose silence on anybody that had a grain of modesty left, when you tell me you have been reading old letters of mine to your daughters and niece? But, alas! it is too late to blush through so many wrinkles! nay, this very hour inflicts threefold penance on me! viz. what you have said, Bell's republication, and Lady Craven's *Travels*, where I make one of the figurants. In truth, and in very sober truth, I constantly lament having been born with a propensity to writing, and still worse to publishing! How many monuments of my folly will survive me! One comfort is, that half the world seems to be as foolish as I have been, and eyes will not be born in plenty enough to read a thousandth part of what each year produces: *Nos numeri sumus*, and *I* shall be no more distinguished than my spare form would be in a living multitude.

For Bell's edition[2], I only am sorry for it as a repub-

LETTER 2660.—[1] Niece of General Conway and Lady Ailesbury; 'a young lady of great musical abilities, and who excelled in an eminent degree on the pedal harp. Her performance on that instrument at Richmond House met with the most distinguished applause of the *cognoscenti*.' (*Gent. Mag.* 1789, part i. p. 89.)

[2] *Fugitive Poetry*, in four volumes.

lication; my epistle[3] is the worst poem in the volume, so I cannot complain of my company. I had no business to write verses, for I was not born a poet, whatever my propensities were; but Bell is a rascal, who at least this way will get nothing by me. He cheated me literally of above 500*l.* on my last volume of the *Anecdotes of Painting*, and now sets me at defiance because he found I would not arrest him.

Lady Craven's *Travels* I received from Robson[4] two hours ago. Dodsley brought the MS. to me before I came to town, but I positively refused to open it, though he told me my name was mentioned in it several times; but I was conscious how grievous it would be to her family and poor daughters, and therefore persisted in having nothing to do with it. I own I have now impatiently cut the leaves in search of my own name, and am delighted on finding it there but thrice, and only by the initial letter. When I have the honour of seeing your Ladyship, I can tell you many collateral circumstances; but I will not put them on paper. I fear she may come to wish, or should, that *she* had not been born with a propensity to writing.

These questions I have answered readily, Madam: but about Calonne and La Motte I know nothing. *They* are a species of outlaws for which I have no taste, nor for their compeeress, Mlle. D'Éon.

I can as little satisfy your Ladyship about the title of Mr. Hayley's fourth play, which I totally forget. I remember the scene lay at Gibraltar, and that the subject was if possible more disgusting than that of *The Mysterious Mother*; and having no self-love for the deformed offspring of other people, I never opened the volume a second time.

[3] *Epistle from Florence to Thomas Ashton*, written in 1740.

[4] Probably James Robson (1733–1806), a bookseller in Bond Street.

Mr. Fox, I am told, is better, but I have seen nobody that is particularly informed; though my house is well situated as a coffee-house, and I very seldom stir from the bar in a morning, I have no intelligence but from those who accidentally drop in, consequently my gazette is commonly striped of two colours, as opposite as black and white, and, if repeated, would sound like the *cross-readings* from newspapers. Truth is said to lie at the bottom of a well, to which I am sure at present there are two buckets, which clash so much, that each brings up as much mud as pure grain. If I do not sift them, at least I do not retail one for the other.

2661. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 10, 1789.

A truce, my good Lady, with my perfections! indeed I have none, and when you compliment me with any praises, you only make me cry, 'Lord, have mercy, can this mean *me*!' If you provoke me, I will write such a just satire on myself, that you shall be ashamed of ever saying a civil thing to me again. Nay, how the deuce should I know myself, when you tell me of my candour; I, who have ever allowed that I am the most unprejudiced of mankind! But do not mistake, Madam; it is not being candid, to have lived to be grown indifferent, which is the best chance that common sense has for obtaining the casting vote in one's own privy council. I must again, too, remonstrate against your showing my letters; ay, for your own sake, if you desire they should be natural, and unreserved. Is it possible to be unaffected, when one knows one is to undergo an ordeal of eyes? Whatever interferes with one's writing, as if *tête à tête* with one's correspondent, must destroy the ease of letters; and who

will dare to write any uppermost folly in the face of half a dozen inquisitors?

Your Ladyship is used to, and has tolerated my fooleries, and to encourage me to continue them, you tell me Lord Holland[1] loves nonsense; but ah, Madam, the nonsense of one age is not the nonsense of another age! I remember the late Lord Leicester, who had formed a *galimatias* that was much to the taste of his contemporaries. He retired to Holkham for a few years, returned to town and to White's; a new generation was come forth, who stared and concluded he was superannuated; and he was forced to pack up his obsolete phrases and antiquated humour and decamp again, to rail at the dullness of the young men. Even wit has its modes on which its success depends, as Sir W. Temple observes of the old Earl of Norwich, and who knows but Lord Brudenel may cease to be laughed at in a future reign! Diogenes Laertius records many witticisms of the old philosophers, which would not raise a smile now in the House of Commons, where our country gentlemen are no niggards of horse-laughs at miserable jokes. If therefore you hold out readers to me, it will be such a *terrorem*, that I shall grow as stiff and formal as her Grace my neighbour Beaufort; begin *with hoping you are well*, and conclude with *compliments to your fireside and all friends*, and tell you as news the prices of commodities at Bear Key[2].

If you had not so dosed me, Madam, with high-flown panegyric, I doubt I should have been flattered by Lord Holland's approbation; but now I dare not listen to the charmer, charm he ever so wisely; nay, I am almost afraid

LETTER 2661.—[1] Henry Richard Fox, third Baron Holland, at this time aged sixteen; afterwards well known in literary and political circles.

[2] Bear Quay, on the river at the end of Bear (now Beer) Lane, which leads from Great Tower Street to Lower Thames Street. A market was formerly held at Bear Quay for corn and other grain.

of commending his very pretty easy verses, lest I should seem to connive at a mart of flattery. I have one set of *Royal and Noble Authors* left, which shall be at his Lordship's command when you tell me whither to direct them.

I am a little surprised, I confess, at your Ladyship's finding it laborious to finish Mr. Gibbon, especially the last volume, which I own, too, delighted me the most—perhaps because I was best acquainted with the subjects of it. In the other volumes I was a little confounded by his leaping backwards and forwards, and I could not recollect all those *fainéant* Emperors of Constantinople, who come again and again, like the same ships in a moving picture. How he could traverse such acres of ill-written histories, even to collect such a great work, astonishes me.

I am reading as multifarious a collection, but by no means with the same alacrity, the *Anacharsis* of the Abbé Barthélemy, four most corpulent quartos, into which he has amassed, and indeed very ingeniously arranged, every passage I believe (for aught I know) that is extant in any Greek or Latin author, which gives any account of Greece and all and every part of it; but, alas! I have not yet waded through the second volume, a sure sign that the appetite of my eyes is decayed. I can read now but for amusement. It is not at all necessary to improve oneself for the next world, especially as one's knowledge will probably not prove standard there. The Abbé is besides a little too partial to the Grecian accounts of their own virtues; and as M. Pauw[3] and Dr. Gillies[4] have lately unhinged their scale of merits, a rehabilitation is no business of mine.

I must not finish without thanking your Ladyship for

[3] Cornelius von Pauw (1739–1799), a German ecclesiastic, and writer of *Recherches Philosophiques* on the Greeks, Americans, Egyptians, and Chinese.

[4] John Gillies, LL.D. (1747–1836), author of a *History of Greece* published in 1786.

sending me *Les Amusemens des Eaux d'Ampthill*: I could return nothing but accounts of political hostilities, in which I hear our Amazons take a very considerable part. Lady Craven, I believe, will scarce make the impression that might be expected from so rash a publication, as she has not a word on the present crisis.

P.S. I am dull, and cannot guess the charades.

2662. To Sir Horace Mann the Younger.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 12, 1789.

I now do believe that the King is coming to *him*self: not in the language of the courtiers, to his senses—but from their proof, viz. that he is returned to his *what! what! what!* which he used to prefix to every sentence, and which is coming to his nonsense. I am corroborated in this opinion by his having said much more sensible things in his lunacy, than he did when he was reckoned sane, which I do not believe he has been for some years.

Well, now, how will this new change of scene operate? I fancy if any one could win access to him, who would tell him the truth, he would be as little pleased with his Queen, and his or her Pitt, as they will take care he shall be with his sons. Would he admire the degradation of his family in the person of all the Princes[1]? or with the tripartite division of royalty between the Queen, the Prince, and Mr. Pitt, which I call a *trinity in disunity*? Will he be charmed with the Queen's admission to power[2], which he never imparted to her? Will he like the discovery of his

Letter 2662.—[1] No member of the royal family was to sit in the council which it was proposed to appoint in order to assist the Queen.

[2] It was proposed to make the Queen the guardian of the King's person, and the head of the royal household, with power to dismiss and appoint.

vast private hoard? Will he be quite satisfied with the codicil to his will, which she surreptitiously obtained from him in his frenzy *in the first agony of her grief*? How will he digest that discovery of his treasure, which will not diffuse great compassion when he shall next ask a payment of his pretended debts? Before his madness he was indisposed towards Pitt; will he be better pleased with him for his new dictatorial presumption?

Turn to the next page—to Ireland. They have chosen for themselves, it is believed, a Regent without restrictions, in scorn of the Parliament of England, and in order farther to assert their independence. Will they recede? especially when their courtiers have flown in the face of our domineering minister? I do not think they will. They may receive the King again on his recovery; but they have united interests with the Prince, and act in league with him, that he may pledge himself to them more deeply in future—at least, they will never again acknowledge any superiority in our Parliament, but rather act in contradistinction.

Feb. 22nd.

The person who was to have brought you this was prevented leaving town, and therefore I did not finish my letter; but I believe I shall have another opportunity of sending, and therefore I will make it ready.

Much has happened this last week. The Prince is Regent of Ireland without limitations—a great point for his character; for Europe will now see that it was a faction that fettered him here, and not his unpopularity, for then would not he have been as much distasted in Ireland? Indeed, their own Attorney-General[3] made way for him by opposing on the most injudicious of all pleas, i. e. that it

[3] John Fitzgibbon (1763-1802), cr. (July 6, 1789) Baron Fitzgibbon of Lower Connello, county Limerick; cr. Earl of Clare, 1795; Lord Chancellor of Ireland, 1789-1802.

would be necessary before he could be Regent there, to set the *Great Seal of England* to the Act! How could the fool imagine, that when that phantom had been invented here, it would not be equally easy for the Irish to invent a parallel phantom of their own? But though this compliment is most grateful to the Prince at present, he will probably find hereafter that he has in effect lost Ireland, who meant more to emancipate themselves from this country than to compliment the Prince or contradict the English ministerial faction.

What will be the consequence of that rapid turn in Ireland, even immediately, who can tell? for the King is called recovered, and the English Regency is suspended, with fresh and grievous insults to the Prince, who with the Duke of York are violently hindered by the Queen from even seeing their father, though she and their sisters play at cards with him in an evening; and that the Chancellor was with him for an hour and three-quarters on the 19th.

Under colour of what new phantom her Majesty, the Chancellor[4], and Pitt will assume the government, we shall know in two or three days; for I do not suppose they will produce the King instantly, at the risk of oversetting his head again, though they seem half as mad as he, and capable of any violent act to maintain themselves. And so much the better: I do not wish them temperate; and it looks as if people never were so in minorities and incapacities of their kings. The Prince set out as indiscreetly as Pitt.

Of the event I am very glad; it saves the Prince and the opposition from the rashness of changing the administration on so precarious and shackled a tenure, and it saves them too from the expense of re-elections. If the King recovers,

[4] Lord Thurlow.

they are but where they were, but with the advantage of having the Prince and Duke of York rooted in aversion to the ministers, and most unlikely to be governed by the Queen. If the King relapses, the opposition stock will rise; though in the meantime I do not doubt but the nation will grow drunk with the loyalty of rejoicing, for kings grow popular by whatever way they lose their heads. Still, whatever eccentricity he attempts, it will be imputed to his deranged understanding. And, however even Lord Hawkesbury may meditate the darkest mischiefs under the new fund of pity and loyalty, he will *not* be for extending the prerogative, which must devolve (on any accident to the King) on the Prince, Duke of York, or some of the Princes, who will all be linked in a common cause with their brothers, who have been so grossly affronted; and Prince William, the third, particularly so by the last cause of hindering his peerage while abroad. The King's recovery before the Regency Act was passed will be another great advantage to the Prince; his hands would have been so shackled, that he could not have found places for half the expectants, who will now impute their disappointments to the King's amendment, and not to the Prince.

Monday, 24th.

The King has seen the Prince, and received him kindly, but the Queen was present. Iron Pluto (as Burke called the Chancellor) wept again when with the King; but what is much more remarkable, his Majesty has not asked for Pitt, and did abuse him constantly during his frenzy. The Chancellor certainly did not put him in mind of Pitt, whom he detests; so there is a pretty potion of hatred to be quaffed amongst them! and swallowed, if they can; yes, *aurum potabile* will make it sit on their stomachs.

2663. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 24, 1789.

The character that has been given to you of the Abbé's book[1] is very just, and it is extremely well described by *a mosaic composed all of bits of truth*; but, alas! the pavement is a fiction, and not slippery enough to make me slide over it: it is, as Mrs. Damer says, a vision, a dream about truths; in short, it is an excellent work for a man of twenty-five, just fresh from the classics, and would range them most compendiously in his head, and he would know where to find any parcel he should want on occasion; but for me, I have not been able to wade to the end of the second volume. I cannot gulp again the reveries of the old philosophers on the origin of the world, and still less the foolish romances of Herodotus, such as that of the patriotic courtier who cut off his own nose and ears in order to betray Babylon to Darius. *Iron tears may fall down Pluto's cheek* when he sees Nebuchadnezzar come to himself; yet even that I should not believe at the distance of two thousand years! Then, having just read Dr. Gillies and Mr. Pauw, I cannot for the life of me admire the Lacedemonians again, nor listen gravely to the legend of Lycurgus, when Mr. Pauw has proved it very doubtful whether any such personage existed; if there did, he only refined savages into greater barbarism. I will tell your Ladyship an additional observation that I made just as I broke off with *Anacharsis*. We are told that Lycurgus allowed theft and enjoined community of goods. I beg to know where was the use of stealing where there was no individual property? Does stealth consist in filching what is your own as much as

Letter 2663. — [1] *Le Voyage du jeune Anacharsis en Grèce*, by the Abbé Barthélemy.

any other man's? It would be like Mr. Cumberland, who steals from himself.

Wednesday.

I had written thus far yesterday morning in answer to a scrap that I had just received from your Ladyship with the query about *Anacharsis*, and then I had visits till three, and then I was obliged to dress and go and leave my name for the houses of Edgcumbe and Hobart[2] on their union. When I came home to dinner, I found your longer letter, which had been outstripped by its postscript, and it was then too late to save the post without burning my mouth from haste, for I am so antiquated as still to dine at four when I can, though frequently prevented, as many are so good as to call on me at that hour, because it is too soon for them to go home and dress so early in the morning.

I did not intend to say a syllable on the King's recovery, as I have nothing but the crumbs which I pick up from those who go every morning to receive their daily faith from the Lord of the Bedchamber at St. James's. I am still less qualified to answer when you ask me where is truth? I reply, how should I know it, even if I could tell where it is? When Pilate asked what it was, I do not find that he was informed. Dr. Beattie[3] may know better, perhaps.

Whatever be the King's case, he is to be pitied: yes, whether he is to be produced, conscious of what has been his situation, or capable of business, yet to be told he must not risk engaging in it, or whether he is to be precipitated back, by undertaking it. Nor is the nation quite undeserving compassion, if it is to be subjected to the freaks of a head that has lost its poise, or to those who insist on

[2] The Hon. Richard Edgcumbe, only son of Lord Mount Edgcumbe, married (Feb. 21, 1789) Lady Sophia Hobart, eldest daughter of second Earl of Buckinghamshire.

[3] Beattie's *Essay on Truth* appeared in 1770.

reigning for him. With such gleams or phantoms of foresight, I cannot much dissent from your Ladyship's apprehension of storms: yet I will hope we shall realize no old prophecies. What the one you refer to was I do not at all recollect; but it sounds something like *Nixon's*[4], an old Cheshire prediction that I have lived to see revived and stillborn again two or three times, as often as the Jacobites were meditating or reviving rebellion. I heard it first when I was at school, and it frightened me terribly. We were to swim in blood up to our chins in the time of George the son of George; which circumstance looked exceedingly probable; and does again with equal or no more probability. A miller with two thumbs (a wonderfully striking phenomenon, though I do not remember its being specified that both were to be on the same hand, though one devoutly concluded so) was to set all to rights again, and such a marvellous miller was said to exist—but enough of these fooleries. If the cloud bursts, it is most likely to fall on the west, whence the Viceroy[5] has refused to send over the votes of both Houses, offering the Regency to the Prince; and yesterday there was a rumour of his Vice-Majesty's being impeached there—which I do not warrant. Nay, I do not know what the English senate is doing, or putting off to-day.

I am sorry my noble authoress's[6] *Travels* do not please you, Madam; in truth, I fear they will add more to her present celebrity than to her future renown. I even doubt whether she would not have been turned into a laurel as soon by running *from* Apollo (which was not her turn), as by running *to* him. You have expressed most happily the greater facility of whiffing gales than of gathering flowers. A box of sumach from Ampthill will be as precious to me as if it came from Serendip.

[4] Robert Nixon, whose prophecies were published in 1714.

[5] The Marquis of Buckingham.

[6] Lady Craven.

Of Mirabeau's book[7] I have heard of nobody that has got a copy here yet, but the Dutch minister, and he the first volume only. The papers to-day say it has been burnt at Paris, which will make it—

On wings of flames come flying all abroad.

The Duke of York, I am told, is not gently treated in it.

There is another *just* or *unjust* volume that makes its appearance, not composed of milk and honey: the object, Bishop Hurd; the author, Dr. Parr. The vehicle, like his *Bellendenus*, an old carriage on new wheels. The title, *Tracts by a Warburtonian*. It is desperately well written; but probably not of the amusing kind to your Ladyship.

I would not interrupt my news, or rather, my replies, and therefore delayed telling you that Tonton is dead, and that I comfort myself: he was grown stone deaf, and very nearly equally blind, and so weak that, the two last days, he could not walk upstairs. Happily, he had not suffered, and died close by my side without a pang or a groan. I have had the satisfaction, for my dear old friend's sake and his own, of having nursed him up, by constant attention, to the age of sixteen, yet always afraid of his surviving me, as it was scarcely possible he could meet a third person who would study his happiness equally. I sent him to Strawberry, and went thither on Sunday to see him buried behind the chapel, near Rosette. I shall miss him greatly, and must not have another dog; I am too old, and should only breed it up to be unhappy when I am gone. My resource is in two marble kittens that Mrs. Damer has given me, of her own work, and which are so much alive that I talk to them, as I did to poor Tonton!

[7] Honoré Gabriel Riquetti (1749–1791), Comte de Mirabeau, the great orator of the Revolution. His book (*Histoire Secrète de la Cour de Berlin*) was the fruit of his own experiences when charged with a secret mission at the Prussian court.

If this is being superannuated, no matter: when dotage can amuse itself, it ceases to be an evil. I fear my marble playfellows are better adapted to me than I am to being your Ladyship's correspondent.

P.S. As you wrote on both ends of your cover, I had missed till this moment on putting up your letter the very kind things you say on Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury, which I take as a great obligation to myself too. He has conquered his concern when nothing happens to strike on it particularly; but Lady A. is not well, and has not yielded to go anywhere but to Mrs. Damer and her brother Lord Frederic; but she sees particular persons at home; and if her health mends, I hope will recover her spirits too —I wish I were as sanguine about my niece, Lady Dysart, who, I fear, is in a decay.

N.B. The nation, like a *paroli* at faro, is gone to sleep for another week; and as the ministers have *set on the King*, they will probably win.

2664. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 28, 1789.

You have overwhelmed me with confusion, Madam. I was aware of frequently sending you a sheet full of nonsense, and I did know, too, that your Ladyship kept my letters; and it was the conscience of the latter that made me more ready to continue the former, as I trusted that a multiplicity of follies would provoke yourself or somebody else to throw them all into the fire; but I own I did not suspect that in so few years they would become totally unintelligible even to myself. The letter you have sent me is so far from unravelling what you alluded to, that I have

not the smallest recollection of the story, nor of what it referred to. I return it, not as a preservative, but trusting that whoever finds it will conclude that the writer of it, and I fear of many more such rhapsodies, was light-headed; and if you have patience to read such letters over again, *Ora pro nobis*, for both of us, Madam.

However, having at present a lucid interval, like my betters, and naturally not loving a dispute, I shall agree to all your Ladyship's creeds in waiting. I will believe that Cheltenham water, which is the most violent of all lotions, and stronger than Madeira and champagne, which so many heads can bear with impunity, may derange the intellects for four months[1], though it has never overset for four-and-twenty hours the brains of so many thousands as have drunk it for at least these hundred years. I will believe that your Ladyship believes that you admire Mr. Pitt on all occasions, which is not extraordinary, as you are so apt always to think favourably of great politicians; and above all things, I rejoice on the comfort you find in having your husband on one side, and your two sons on the other, which must harmonize your mind; and methinks you might extend that satisfaction still further. I cannot see the least reason why his Majesty should relapse, even if he should return to Cheltenham next summer, as he told Sir Joseph Banks last Saturday (since his recovery) he intends. I have even more faith in perfect recoveries than his Majesty has, who has often declared he doubted of my nephew's. Bless me, has not my nephew recovered perfectly *twice*! and the last time of his coming to that perfection, did not he, in a week after Dr. Monro had pronounced him sane, give the strongest proof of sound intellects, by march-

LETTER 2664.—[1] It was reported that the effect of the Cheltenham waters on the King's constitution had contributed to cause his insanity.

ing to Norwich at the head of the Norfolk militia (which the King had commanded me to prevent, and which I could not), and write in the orderly book there, that if the French should land on any part of the coast, the magistrates were to burn the suburbs of that city, which would then be impregnable.

You see, Madam, how accommodating my faith is! It requires still less exertion to fit it to the prognostics in your last. I did then foresee some hurly-burly; and the Marquis of Buckingham seems to have opened a serious sluice; and should he be supported in the imperative mood that was *so judiciously* adopted at the commencement of the American troubles, I should not be surprised if the Irish were to weigh anchor and sail into the Atlantic ocean of independence after the colonists; and then the son, like his father George Grenville, would have the honour of losing another sovereignty; or like the sage Duc d'Olivares[2] might congratulate his master on a rebellion, which would give him an opportunity of enslaving his own subjects. If all this should happen, pray advertise me in time, Madam, that I may *always admire* the Marquis of Buckingham too.

As you have made me ashamed of my foolish letters, I will add no more to this, but a heap of thanks for the *Portrait du Prince Allemand*; for your kind inquiries about Lady Dysart, who has and deserves her character and my full affection, and who, though much better for this last week, I fear is in a declining state; and for the obliging offer of another dog—but against that I most positively protest. My life is too far wasted and too precarious to embark in any new care. I have such a passion for dogs, that a favourite one is a greater misery than pleasure, and to give me one is to sow me with anxiety. I would as soon adopt Mademoiselle Fagniani.

[2] Chief minister of Philip IV of Spain; d. 1645.

2665. To the Earl of Charlemont.

Berkeley Square, March 11, 1789.

Mr. Walpole is infinitely sensible of and grateful for the great trust with which Lord Charlemont has so kindly honoured him, and which he repeats his promise of never abusing. He has only to wish that he had dared to ask what from such a specimen of poetic wit he was tempted to solicit, a communication of more instances of such a talent.

2666. To Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.

Berkeley Square, March 20, 1789.

Mrs. Damer had lent her Madame de la Motte[1], and I have but this moment recovered it; so you see I had not forgotten it any more than my engagements to you: nay, were it not ridiculous at my age to use a term so almost run out as *never*, I would add that you will find I *never* can forget you.

I hope you are not engaged this day sevennight, but will allow me to wait on you to Lady Aylesbury, which I will settle with her when I have your answer. I did mention it to her in general, but have no day free before Friday next, except Thursday; when, if there is another illumination[2], as is threatened, we should neither get thither nor thence; especially not the latter, if the former is impracticable.

Quicquid delirant Reges, plectuntur Achivi.

Your devoted remembrancer,

Hor. Walpole.

Letter 2665. — Not in C.; now first printed (original in the library of the Royal Irish Academy).

Letter 2666.—[1] Her *Mémoires Justificatifs*, relative to the affair of the diamond necklace.

[2] London was illuminated on March 10 in honour of the King's recovery.

P.S. I have got a few hairs of Edward the Fourth's *head*, not *beard*; they are of a darkish brown, not auburn.

2667. To Miss Mary Berry.

March 25, 1789.

You have not half the quickness that I thought you had —or, which is much more probable, I suspect that I am a little in love, and you are not, for I think I should have understood *you* in two syllables, which has not been your case. I had sealed my note, and was going to send it when yours arrived with the invitation for Saturday. I was to dine abroad, and had not time to break open my note or write it again, and so lifted up a corner and squeezed in *I will*. What could those syllables mean, but that I will do whatever you please? Yes, you may keep them as a note of hand, always payable at sight of your commands or your sister's; for I am not less in love with my wife Rachel than with my wife Leah; and though I had a little forgotten my matrimonial vows at the beginning of this note, and was awkward, and haggled a little about owning my passion, now I recollect that I have taken a double dose, I am mighty proud of it; and being more in the right than ever lover was, and twice as much in the right too, I avow my sentiments, *hardiment*, and am,

Hymen, O Hymenaee!

2668. To Miss Mary Berry.

Suavissima Maria, April 14, 1789.

I could not answer your note yesterday, for I was at dinner, as I do not wait till the Great Mogul, fashion, gives me leave to sit down to table. Besides, I was to go

Letter 2667.—Not in C. Letter 2668.—Not in C.

to the play, and like to see the beginning as well as the end.

I pray that our papa may find a house at Twickenham. Hampton Court is half-way to Switzerland.

I am not asked to Lady Juliana's[1], and therefore must give you up for this week as vagrants; but when you are passed back to your parish I will certainly see you, especially on this day sennight.

In the middle of the last act last night there was an interlude of a boxing match, but it was in the front boxes. The folks in the pit, who could not see behind them better than they generally can before them through domes and pyramids of muslin, hinted to the combatants to retire, which they did into the lobby, where a circle was made, and there the champions pulled one another's hair, and a great deluge of powder ensued; but being well greased like Grecian pugilists, not many curls were shed. Adieu!

2669. To Miss Hannah More.

Dear Madam, Berkeley Square, April 22, 1789.

As perhaps you have not yet seen *The Botanic Garden*[1] (which I believe I mentioned to you), I lend it you to read. The poetry, I think, you will allow most admirable; and difficult it was, no doubt. If you are not a naturalist, as well as a poetess, perhaps you will lament that so powerful a talent has been wasted to so little purpose; for where is the use of describing in verse what nobody can understand without a long prosaic explanation of every article? It is still more unfortunate that there is not a symptom of plan in the whole poem. The lady-flowers and their lovers enter in pairs or trios, or &c., as often as the couples in *Cassandra*,

[1] Lady Juliana Penn.

Letter 2669.—[1] By Dr. Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802).

and you are not a whit more interested about one heroine and her swain than about another. The similes are beautiful, fine, and sometimes sublime: and thus the episodes will be better remembered than the mass of the poem itself, which one cannot call *the subject*; for could one call it a subject, if anybody had composed a poem on the matches formerly made in the Fleet, where, as Waitwell says in *The Way of the World*, they stood like couples in rows ready to begin a country-dance? Still, I flatter myself, you will agree with me that the author is a great poet, and could raise the passions, and possesses all the requisites of the art. I found but a single bad verse: in the last canto one line ends *e'er long*. You will perhaps be surprised at meeting a truffle converted into a nymph, and inhabiting a palace studded with emeralds and rubies like a saloon in the *Arabian Nights*! I had a more particular motive for sending this poem to *you*: you will find the bard espousing your poor Africans. There is besides, which will please you too, a handsome panegyric on the apostle of humanity, Mr. Howard.

Mrs. Garrick, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in her own box at Mr. Conway's play, gave me a much better account of your health, which delighted me. I am sure, my good friend, you partake of my joy at the great success of his comedy. The additional character of the Abbé pleased much: it was added by the advice of the players to enliven it; that is, to stretch the jaws of the pit and galleries. I sighed silently; for it was originally so genteel and of a piece, that I was sorry to have it tumbled by coarse applauses. But this is a secret. I am going to Twickenham for two days on an assignation with the spring, and to avoid the riotous devotion of to-morrow[2].

[2] On April 23, 1789, the King went in state to St. Paul's to return thanks on his recovery.

A gentleman essayist has printed what he calls some strictures on my *Royal and Noble Authors*, in revenge for my having spoken irreverently (on Bishop Burnet's authority) of the Earl of Anglesey[3], who had the honour, it seems, of being the gentleman's grandfather. He asks me, by the way, why it was more ridiculous in the Duke of Newcastle[4] to write his two comedies, than in the Duke of Buckingham to write *The Rehearsal*? Alas! I know but one reason; which is, that it is less ridiculous to write one excellent comedy, than two very bad ones. Peace be with such answerers! Adieu, my dear Madam!

Yours most cordially,

Hor. Walpole.

2670. To Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.

April 28, at night, 1789.

By my not saying *no* to Thursday, you, I trust, understood that I meant *yes*; and so I do. In the meantime, I send you the most delicious poem upon earth. If you don't know what it is all about, or why, at least you will find glorious similes about everything in the world, and I defy you to discover three bad verses in the whole stack. Dryden was but the prototype of *The Botanic Garden* in his charming *Flower and Leaf*; and if he had less meaning, it is true he had more plan: and I must own that his white velvets and green velvets, and rubies and emeralds, were much more virtuous gentlefolks than most of the flowers of the creation, who seem to have no fear of Doctors' Commons before their eyes. This is only the second part; for, like

[3] Arthur Annesley (1614–1686), first Earl of Anglesey. The passage referred to is as follows:—'Bishop Burnet . . . paints him as a tedious and ungraceful orator, as a grave, abandoned, and corrupt man, whom no party would trust.'

[4] William Cavendish (1593–1676), first Duke of Newcastle.

my king's eldest daughter in the *Hieroglyphic Tales*, the first part is not born yet:—no matter. I can read this over and over again for ever; for though it is so excellent, it is impossible to remember anything so disjointed, except you consider it as a collection of short enchanting poems—as the Circe at her tremendous devilries in a church; the intrigue of the dear nightingale and rose; and the description of Medea; the episode of Mr. Howard, which ends with the most sublime of lines—in short, all, all, all is the most lovely poetry. And then one sighs that such profusion of poetry, magnificent and tender, should be thrown away on what neither interests nor instructs, and, with all the pains the notes take to explain, is scarce intelligible.

How strange it is that a man should have been inspired with such enthusiasm of poetry by poring through a microscope, and peeping through the keyholes of all the seraglios of all the flowers in the universe! I hope his discoveries may leave any impression but of the universal polygamy going on in the vegetable world, where, however, it is more gallant than amongst [the] human race; for you will find that they are the botanic ladies who keep harems, and not the gentlemen. Still, *I* will maintain that it is much better that we should have two wives than your sex two husbands. So pray don't mind Linnæus and Dr. Darwin; Dr. Madan had ten times more sense. Adieu!

Your doubly constant

TELYPTHORUS.

2671. To Sir John Fenn.

Berkeley Square, May 15, 1789.

MR. WALPOLE was very sorry to be so ill as not to be able to see Sir John Fenn when he did him the favour of

LETTER 2671. — Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. Arthur H. Frere.

calling; but being a little better now, he shall be glad of that honour any morning when Sir John Fenn has nothing better to do.

2672. To Sir John Fenn.

Mr. Walpole is very sorry to disappoint Sir John Fenn again, but if he thought of calling to-day, Mr. W. must beg to be excused, as he has had a very painful night, and is not able to see anybody, but hopes to be better in a few days.

2673. To Sir John Fenn.

Berkeley Square, May 27, 1789.

Mr. Walpole being now much better, will be glad of the honour of seeing Sir John Fenn any morning after eleven that he is at leisure.

2674. To Richard Gough.

Berkeley Square, May 28, 1789.

Mr. Walpole is extremely ashamed of receiving so magnificent a present[1] from Mr. Gough; and yet thinks it would be a want of the respect and gratitude he owes him not to accept it with a thousand thanks, and with the admiration it deserves, and to which the voice of the public will certainly give its deserved praise, and in which Mr. Gough's well-known judgement and accuracy is not likely to have left any errors, and none, Mr. Walpole is very sure, that he is capable of finding.

Letter 2672. — Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. Arthur H. Frere.

Letter 2673. — Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. Arthur H. Frere.

Letter 2674. — Not in C.; reprinted from Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. vi. p. 282 n.

[1] A new edition of Camden's *Britannia*.

Mr. Walpole begs pardon of Mr. Gough for not thanking him with his own hand; but has been very ill with the gout for this month, and is not yet able to write himself.

2675. To Sir John Fenn.

Berkeley Square, June 1, 1789.

Mr. Walpole is extremely concerned that his illness prevented him from the satisfaction of seeing Sir John Fenn when he was in town, Mr. Walpole having relapsed when Sir John was so good as to call the second time. On being a little better, Mr. Walpole did send to ask that favour once more, but hearing nothing concludes that Sir John is returned to Norfolk, and can now only express his mortification, and his desire of offering his best compliments to Lady Fenn.

2676. To Mrs. Carter.

Dear Madam, Berkeley Square, June 13, 1789.

Dr. Douglas[1] has been so good, at your desire, as to inquire after me, and will let you know that I mend, though slowly, as is very natural at my age, and with my shattered limbs. I cannot, however, content myself, though your kindness would be so, with a mere answer that is satisfactory enough. You must allow me to add my own thanks, as I feel much obliged, and am proud of your thinking me at all deserving to interest your sensibility, though I am not conscious of sufficient merit. I do not mean, however, to misemploy much of your time, which I know is always passed in good works, and usefully. You have, therefore, probably not looked into ——'s *Travels*[2]. I, who have been

Letter 2675.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mr. Arthur H. Frere.

Letter 2676.—[1] Brother-in-law of Mrs. Carter.

[2] Probably Mrs. Piozzi's *Observations and Reflections made in the course of a Journey through France, Italy,*

almost six weeks lying on a couch, have gone through them. It was said that Addison might have written his without going out of England. By the excessive vulgarisms so plentiful in these volumes, one might suppose the writer had never stirred out of the parish of St. Giles. Her Latin, French, and Italian, too, are so miserably spelt, that she had better have studied her own language before she floundered into other tongues. Her friends plead that she piques herself on writing as she talks: methinks, then, she should talk as she would write. There are many indiscretions too in her work, of which she will perhaps be told, though B——[3] is dead.

I shall remove to Twickenham next week, to enjoy my roses at least, since I have lost my lilacs and nightingales. I ought, I know, dear Madam, to beg you would not take the trouble of answering this; but when you have the great good nature of remembering my gout, how ungrateful it would be to deny myself the pleasure of hearing that you have not suffered much lately by your headaches! I dare not flatter myself that they are cured, for when are constitutional evils quite removed? We, who have intervals, and still more, on whom Providence has showered comforts, even when we are in pain, must recollect what more durable sufferings exist, and how many miserable beings have no fortunes to purchase alleviations. This I speak for myself, who know how far I am from deserving any of the blessings I enjoy. You, my dear Madam, have led a life of virtue, and never forget your duties; it would be strange then if I confounded you with

Your very respectful
And obliged humble servant,
HORACE WALPOLE.

and Germany, published in 1789 in two volumes.

[3] Baretti, with whom Mrs. Piozzi had quarrelled and who attacked her fiercely on her second marriage. He died on May 5, 1789.

2677. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Your Ladyship is most obliging, and I will let the Strawberries know the honour you intended them, but, alas! they go into Yorkshire on Wednesday[1] for two months. *I* shall be quite content with the party named of yourselves, your two lady daughters, and Mr. Selwyn. You have all seen how likely I am to tumble on my nose, and therefore I shall not be ashamed if I do; but I do not wish for more witnesses; and as I cannot stand to show my house, you will be so good as to excuse my sitting; and I should grow confused if I had new honours to do, and could not perform them.

2678. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Monday evening.

The coach did not deliver your Ladyship's obliging note till four o'clock this afternoon, when the post had been gone out three hours, so I could only thank you by to-morrow morning's coach, or you would be set out for Ampthill.

I did, I own, hurt myself pretty much, Madam, but it was a mere muscular bruise. I sent for the apothecary as soon as you were gone, but with my gout*icity* he would not venture to bleed me. He recommended frequent repetitions of arquebusade, which have certainly alleviated the pain, though he thinks it will continue for a few days. As I did not break a rib, I have only lost the two that are gone to Yorkshire.—Your Ladyship's most obliged humble servant.

Letter 2677. — Hitherto printed as part of the letter of Nov. 13, 1777. (See *Notes and Queries*, Sept. 15, 1900.)

[1] June 17, 1789.

Letter 2678. — Hitherto placed amongst letters of March 1789. (See *Academy*, Aug. 8, 1896; *Notes and Queries*, Sept. 15, 1900.)

2679. To Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Tuesday, June 23, 1789.

I am not a little disappointed and mortified at the post bringing me no letter from you to-day; you promised to write on the road. I reckon you arrived at your station on Sunday evening: if you do not write till next day, I shall have no letter till Thursday!

I am not at all consoled for my double loss: my only comfort is, that I flatter myself the journey and air will be of service to you both. The latter has been of use to me, though the part of the element of air has been chiefly acted by the element of water, as my poor haycocks feel! Tonton[1] does not miss you so much as I do, not having so good a taste; for he is grown very fond of *me*, and I return it for your sakes, though he deserves it too, for he is perfectly good-natured and tractable; but he is not beautiful, like his 'god dog,' as Mr. Selwyn, who dined here on Saturday, called my poor late favourite; especially as I have had him clipped. The shearing has brought to light a nose an ell long; and, as he has now *nasum rhinocerotis*, I do not doubt but he will be a better critic in poetry than Dr. Johnson, who judged of harmony by the principles of an author, and fancied, or wished to make others believe, that no Jacobite could write bad verses, nor a Whig good.

I passed so many evenings of the last fortnight with you, that I almost preferred it to our two honeymoons, and consequently am the more sensible to the deprivation; and how dismal was *Sunday* evening, compared to those of last autumn! If you both felt as I do, we might surpass *any* event in the annals of Dunmow. Oh, what a prodigy it

Letter 2679.—[1] A dog belonging to the Miss Berrys, left in Horace Walpole's care during their absence in Yorkshire.

would be if a husband and *two* wives should present themselves and demand the flitch of bacon, on swearing that not one of the three in a year and a day had wished to be unmarried! For my part, I know that my affection has done nothing but increase; though were there but one of you, I should be ashamed of being so strongly attached at my age; being in love with both, I glory in my passion, and think it a proof of my sense. Why should not two affirmatives make a negative, as well as the reverse? and then a double love will be wisdom—for what is wisdom in reality but a negative? It exists but by correcting folly, and when it has peevishly prevailed on us to abstain from something we have a mind to, it gives itself airs, and in action pretends to be a personage, a nonentity sets up for a figure of importance! It is the case of most of those phantoms called virtues, which, by smothering poor vices, claim a reward as thief-takers do. You know I have a partiality for drunkenness, though I never practised it: it is a reality; but what is sobriety, only the absence of drunkenness? However, *mes chères femmes,* I make a difference between women and men, and do not extend my doctrine to your sex. Everything is excusable in us, and nothing in you. And pray remember that I will not lose my flitch of bacon—though.

Have you shed a tear over the Opera House[2]? or do you agree with me that there is no occasion to rebuild it? The nation has long been tired of operas, and has now a good opportunity of dropping them. Dancing protracted their existence for some time! but *the room after* was the real support of both, and was like what has been said of your sex, that they never speak their true meaning but in the postscript of their letters. Would not it be sufficient to build an after-room on the whole *emplacement,* to which

[2] Burnt down on the night of June 17, 1789.

people might resort from all assemblies? It should be a codicil to all the diversions of London; and the greater the concourse, the more excuse there would be for staying all night, from the impossibility of ladies getting their coaches to drive up. To be crowded to death in a waiting-room, at the end of an entertainment, is the whole joy; for who goes to any diversion till the last minute of it? I am persuaded that, instead of retrenching St. Athanasius's Creed, as the Duke of Grafton proposed in order to draw *good company* to church, it would be more efficacious if the congregation were to be indulged with an after-room in the vestry; and, instead of two or three being gathered together, there would be all the world, before prayers would be quite over.

Wednesday.—I calculated too rightly; no letter to-day! yet I am not proud of my computation, I had rather have heard of you to-day; it would have looked like keeping your promise. It has a bad air your forgetting me so early; nay, and after your scoffing me for supposing you would not write till your arrival I don't know where. You see I think of *you*, and write every day, though I cannot dispatch my letter till you have sent me a direction. Much the better I am indeed for your not going to Switzerland. Yorkshire is in the glaciers for me, and you are as cold as Mr. Palmer. Miss Agnes was coy, and was not so flippant of promising me letters; well, but I do trust *she will* write, and then, Madam, she and I will go to Dunmow without you.

Apropos, as Mrs. Cambridge's[3] beauty has kept so unfaded, and Mr. Cambridge's passion is so undiminished, and as they are good economists, I am astonished they have laid in no stock of bacon, when they could have it for asking.

[3] Mary, daughter of George Trenchard, of Lytchet Maltravers, Dorsetshire; d. 1806.

Thursday night.

Despairing, beside a clear stream
A shepherd forsaken was laid;

not very close to the stream, but within-doors in sight of it; for in this damp weather a lame old Colin cannot lie and despair with any comfort on a wet bank: but I smile against the grain, and am seriously alarmed at Thursday being come, and no letter! I dread one of you being ill, and then shall detest the Duke of Northumberland's rapacious steward more than ever. Mr. Batt[4] and the Abbé Nicholls[5] dined with me to-day, and I could talk of you *en pais de connoissance*. They tried to persuade me that I have no cause to be in a fright about you; but I have such perfect faith in the kindness of both of you, as I have in your possessing every other virtue, that I cannot believe but some sinister accident must have prevented my hearing from you. I wish Friday was come! I cannot write about anything else till I have a letter.

Friday, 26*th*.—My anxiety increases daily, for still I have no letter; you cannot all three be ill, and if any one is, I should flatter myself another would have written, or if any accident has happened. Next to your having met with some ill luck, I should be mortified at being forgotten so suddenly. Of any other vexation I have no fear; so much goodness and good sense as you both possess would make me perfectly easy if I were really your husband. I must then suspect some accident, and shall have no tranquillity till a letter puts me out of pain. Jealous I am not, for two young ladies cannot have run away with their father to Gretna Green. Hymen, O Hymenaee! bring me good news to-morrow, and a direction too, or you do nothing.

[4] John Thomas Batt, of Newhall near Salisbury, and Commissioner for auditing the Public Accounts.

[5] Rev. Norton Nicholls, the friend and correspondent of Gray.

Saturday.—Io Paean! Io Tonton! At last I have got a letter, and you are all well! And I am so pleased, that I forget the four uneasy days I have passed—at present I have neither time or paper to say more, for our post turns on its heel and goes out the instant it is come. I am in some distress still, for, thoughtless creature, you have sent me no direction—luckily Lady Cecilia told me yesterday you had bidden her direct to you to be left at the post-house at York, which was more than you told me; but I will venture. If you do receive this, I beseech you never forget, as you move about, to send me new directions.

Do not be frightened at the enormity of this, I do not mean to continue so fourpaginous in every letter. Mr. C.[6] has this instant come in, and would damp me if I were going to scribble more. Adieu, adieu, adieu all three.

Your dutiful son-in-law and most affectionate husband,

H. W.

P.S. I beg pardon, I see on the last side of your letter there is a direction.

2680. To Miss Hannah More.

Madam Hannah, Strawberry Hill, June 23, 1789.

You are an errant reprobate, and grow wickeder and wickeder every day. You deserve to be treated like a *nègre*; and your favourite Sunday, to which you are so partial, that you treat the other poor six days of the week as if they had no souls to be saved, should, if I could have my will,

Shine no Sabbath-day for you.

Now, don't simper, and look as innocent as if virtue

[6] Mr. Cambridge.

Letter 2680. — Collated with original in possession of Mrs. Macquoid, Holmhurst, St. Albans.

would not melt in your mouth—can you deny the following charges?

I lent you *The Botanic Garden*, and you returned it without writing a syllable, or saying where you were or whither you was going—I suppose for fear I should know how to direct to you—why, if I did send a letter after you, could not you keep it three months without an answer, as you did last year?

In the next place, you and your *nine* accomplices, who, by the way, are too good in keeping you company, have clubbed the prettiest poem[1] imaginable, and communicated it to Mrs. Boscawen, with injunctions not to give a copy of it—I suppose because you are ashamed of having written a panegyric—whenever you *do* compose a satire, you are ready enough to publish it—at least, whenever you do, you will din one to death with it.—But now, mind your perverseness; that very pretty novel poem, and I must own it is charming, have you gone and spoiled, flying in the faces of your best friends the Muses, and keeping no *measures* with them—I'll be shot if they dictated two of the best lines with two syllables too much in each—nay, you have weakened one of them,

Ev'n Gardiner's mind

is far more expressive than *steadfast* Gardiner's—and, as Mrs. Boscawen says, whoever knows anything of Gardiner could not want that superfluous epithet—and whoever does not would not be the wiser for your foolish insertion—Mrs. Boscawen did not call it foolish, but I do.

The second line, as Mesdemoiselles handed it to you, Miss, was,

And[2] all be free and saved—

not *All be free and all be saved*: the second *all be* is a most unnecessary tautology. The poem was perfect and faultless,

[1] *Bonner's Ghost.*

[2] Hitherto printed 'Have.'

if you could have let it alone. I wonder how your mischievous flippancy could help maiming that most new and beautiful expression, *sponge of sins*; I should not have been surprised, as you love verses too full of feet, if you had changed it to *that scrubbing-brush of sins.*

Well, I will say no more now: but if you do not order me a copy of *Bonner's Ghost* incontinently, never dare to look my printing-house in the face again.—Or come, I'll tell you what; I will forgive all your enormities if you will let me print your poem. I like to filch a little immortality out of others, and the Strawberry Press could never have a better opportunity. I will not haggle for the public—I will be content with printing only two hundred copies, of which you shall have half, and I half.—It shall cost you nothing but a yes. I only propose this in case you do not mean to print it yourself. Tell me sincerely which you like—but as to not printing it at all, charming and unexceptionable as it is, you cannot be so preposterous.

I by no means have a thought of detracting from your own share in your own poem; but, as I do suspect that it caught some inspiration from your devout[3] perusal of *The Botanic Garden,* so I hope you will discover that *my* style is much improved by having lately studied Madame Piozzi's[4] *Travels*—there I dipped, and not in St. Gyles's Pound, where one would think she[5] had been educated.—Adieu!

Your friend,
Or, mortal foe,
As you behave on the present occasion,
H. Walpole.

[3] This word is scratched out and omitted in the letter as hitherto printed, but can still be made out.

[4] Left blank in the 4to ed. of Horace Walpole's *Works*, in which the letter was first printed. Cunningham prints 'Bruce's Travels.'

[5] Altered (by Hannah More) in the original to 'this,' and the word 'author' inserted, to conceal the mention of Mrs. Piozzi. The name is scratched out in the original, but can still be read.

2681. To Richard Gough.

Strawberry Hill, June 27, 1789.

My portrait of Humphry Duke of Gloucester, Sir, from which I have made his print, is on the door of an altar-table, which came out of St. Edmundsbury, and belonged to Peter Leneve, Norroy, and by his widow went to Martin, at whose sale Mr. Ives bought it, as after his death I did, since Mr. Granger published his catalogue. The portrait agrees extremely with and confirms another that I always concluded represents the same prince in my marriage of Henry 6th, as another side of one of the doors corresponds too with the portrait of Archbishop Kempe in the same marriage. Another side has Cardinal Beaufort, less striking, but not quite unlike his head, as I suppose, in my picture.

I cannot give you equal satisfaction, Sir, on the portrait of Duchess Jacqueline. I do not even remember it in Mr. West's possession, nor can I say I recollect ever to have seen a portrait in enamel so early as her time. In truth, Mr. West's authority was not very good. His knowledge, judgement, and, I will not say more, were not to be depended on. In his large picture of Henry 8th and his family, which I bought at his sale, are Philip and Mary bringing in war; Elizabeth, peace and plenty, two emblematic figures with their emblems, and with naked feet. These Mr. West called the Countesses of Shrewsbury and Salisbury—though there was no Countess of Salisbury in the reign of Elizabeth—he might as well have called Mars, Guy Earl of Warwick. Moreover he put the name of Antonio More on the picture, though More certainly did not paint here in the same Queen's time. The real painter,

Letter 2681. — Not in C.; now printed from original in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

I have no doubt, was Otho Venius[1], the master of Rubens, whose colouring it resembles, though in a much weaker style; and the two ends of the picture are exactly in the manner of Venius's emblems.

Of the MS. after which you inquire, Sir, I know nothing at all, nor ever heard of it. What little information is within my narrow compass, I am always ready and happy to give you, Sir, as everybody should for the sake of the public, as well as for your own satisfaction, though nobody owes it more to you, Sir, nor has more respect for you, than

Your much obliged
And obedient humble servant,
HOR. WALPOLE.

2682. To MISS MARY BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, June 30, 1789.

I AM more an old fondle-wife than I expected when I could put myself into such a fright on not hearing from you exactly on the day I had settled I should; but you had promised to write on the road; and though you did, your letter was not sent to the post at the first stage, as almighty love had concluded it would be, and as almighty love would have done; and so he imagined some dreadful calamity must have happened to you. But you are safe under grand-maternal wings, and I will say no more on what has not happened. Pray present my duty to grand-mama, and let her know what a promising young grandson she has got.

Were there any such thing as sympathy at the distance of two hundred miles, you would have been in a mightier panic than I was; for, on Saturday sennight, going to open the glass case in the tribune, my foot caught in the carpet,

[1] Otto Voenius or Van Veen.

and I fell with my whole weight (*si* weight *y a*) against the corner of the marble altar, on my side, and bruised the muscles so badly, that for two days I could not move without screaming. I am convinced I should have broken a rib, but that I fell on the cavity whence two of my ribs were removed, that are gone to Yorkshire. I am much better both of my bruise and my lameness, and shall be ready to dance at my own wedding when my wives return.

Philip, who has been prowling about by my order, has found a clever house, but it is on Ham Common, and that is too far off; and I think Papa Berry does not like that side of the water—and he is in the right. Philip shall hunt again and again till he puts up better game: and now to answer your letter.

If you grow tired of the *Arabian Nights*, you have no more taste than Bishop Atterbury, who huffed Pope for sending him them (or the *Persian Tales*), and fancied he liked Virgil better, who had no more imagination than Dr. Akenside. Read Sinbad the Sailor's Voyages, and you will be sick of Æneas's. What woful invention were the nasty poultry that dunged on his dinner, and ships on fire turned into Nereids! A barn metamorphosed into a cascade in a pantomime is full as sublime an effort of genius. I do not know whether the *Arabian Nights* are of Oriental origin or not: I should think not, because I never saw any other Oriental composition that was not bombast without genius, and figurative without nature; like an Indian screen, where you see little men on the foreground, and larger men hunting tigers above in the air, which they take for perspective. I do not think the Sultaness's narratives very natural or very probable, but there is a wildness in them that captivates. However, if you could wade through two octavos of Dame Piozzi's *though's* and *so's* and *I trow's*, and cannot listen to seven volumes of Scheherezade's narrations, I will sue for

a divorce *in foro Parnassi*, and Boccalini shall be my proctor. The cause will be a counterpart to the sentence of the Lacedæmonian, who was condemned for breach of the peace, by saying in three words what he might have said in two.

You are not the first Eurydice that has sent her husband to the devil, as you have kindly proposed to me; but I will not undertake the jaunt, for if old Nicholas Pluto should enjoin me not to look back to you, I should certainly forget the prohibition like my predecessor. Besides, I am a little too old to take a voyage twice which I am so soon to repeat; and should be laughed at by the good folks on the other side of the water, if I proposed coming back for a twinkling only. No; I choose as long as I can

Still with my fav'rite Berrys to remain[1].

So, you was not quite satisfied, though you ought to have been transported, with King's College Chapel, because it has no aisles, like every common cathedral. I suppose you would object to a bird of paradise, because it has no legs, but shoots to heaven in a *trait*, and does not rest on earth. Criticism and comparison spoil many tastes. You should admire all bold and unique essays that resemble nothing else; *The Botanic Garden*, the *Arabian Nights*, and King's Chapel are above all rules: and how preferable is what no one can imitate, to all that is imitated even from the best models! Your partiality to the pageantry of popery I do approve, and I doubt whether the world would not be a loser (in its

LETTER 2682. — [1] The last line (slightly altered) of some verses addressed to Horace Walpole by Mary Berry. (See her *Journal*, vol. i. p. 155.) After touching on the notoriety into which Walpole's friendship had brought herself and her sister, the verses end as follows:—

'The Berries, conscious all this sudden name
Prov'd not their value, but their patron's fame— . . .
Wisely determined still to court the shade,
To those that *sought* them only pleasing made;
No greater honours anxious to obtain,
But still *your* fav'rite Berries to remain.'

visionary enjoyments) by the extinction of that religion, as it was by the decay of chivalry and the proscription of the heathen deities. Reason has no invention; and as plain sense will never be the legislator of human affairs, it is fortunate when taste happens to be regent.

But I must talk of family affairs. I am delighted that my next letter is to come from wife the second. I love her as much as you, nay, and I am sure you like that I should. I should not love either so much, if your affection for each other were not so mutual; I observe and watch all your ways and doings, and the more I observe you, the more virtues I discover in both—nay, depend upon it, if I discern a fault, you shall hear of it. You came too perfect into my hands to let you be spoilt by indulgence. All the world admires you, yet you have contracted no vanity, advertised no pretensions, are simple and good as nature made you, in spite of all your improvements—mind *you* and *yours* are always, from my lips and pen, of what grammarians call the *common of two*, and signify *both*—so I shall repeat that memorandum no more.

Your friends Lady Harriet Conyers and Lady Juliana Penn have again settled in our environs, the former within a few paces of Lady Cecilia, the latter in the parsonage of Hanworth, where she must be content in an evening with the house of St. Albans, who are not quite in her style: for the Heath at night will terrify all the lozenges[2] in the neighbourhood. Your friends are charming, but will not comfort me for what I have lost.

Mrs. Anderson[3], who you know arrived too late, described the adventure of Major Dixon[4] to the Duchess of Gloucester,

[2] The arms of widows and spinsters are borne on a lozenge-shaped shield.

[3] Caroline, daughter of General and Lady Cecilia Johnston; m. Francis Evelyn, son of Francis Anderson, of Manby, Lincolnshire, and brother of the first Earl of Yarborough.

[4] A character assumed by Mr. Jerningham.

and diverted her with it exceedingly; but I immediately found out that she had related it as if he had talked French the whole time, though not a word had passed in that language. This showed her parts and invention.

What a confusion of seasons! the haymakers are turning my soaked hay, which is fitter for a water-souchy, and I sit by the fire every night when I come home. Adieu! I dare not tap a fourth page, for when talking to you I know not how to stop.

2683. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, July 1, 1789.

My fall, Madam, did not deserve the kind attention your Ladyship has paid to it. By bathing my side with arquebusade and camphor till I smelt like a gin-shop, even the blackness is gone, and I have no pain now but in my hay, which has been sopping these twelve days. I am determined never to cut my grass again till October, the only month whose honour one can trust: June always ruins one in hay and coals: I crouch every evening over the fire.

Madam, I know how to feel for you on the imminent danger you are in from the princely visit to Woburn. One great cause of my loyalty and legality is a wish that the King may never die, lest, on a demise of the crown, Hampton Court should become the seat of empire, and Strawberry Hill consequently grow within the purlieus of the court, which would be a still worse grievance than the crowds that come to see my house.

In what a combustion is France! I understand nothing I hear or read. Necker dismissed and recalled by the people! I concluded that *he* had sown the seeds of division in the States, in hopes of an excuse for dissolving them after rashly recommending them. Famine threatens them too; an

Englishman who came back a few days ago could not for any sum purchase a morsel of white bread at Calais. *We* have horse-room and cart-room for being as mad as we please. Loutherbourg, the painter, is turned an inspired physician, and has three thousand patients. His sovereign panacea is barley-water. I believe it as efficacious as mesmerism. Baron Swedenborg's disciples multiply also. I am glad of it: the more religions and the more follies the better: they inveigle proselytes from one another. I used to be afraid of the hosts of methodists, but Mother Church is safe if there is plenty of heresiarchs, and physicians pretend to a vocation too. You see, Madam, whatever you may have thought, that I am a good subject and a good Church-of-England-man. The fact is, all reformations are experiments, and *le jeu* seldom *vaut les chandelles.* If one could cure the world of being foolish, *à la bonne heure*; but to cure it of one folly is only making room for another. If Luther could have foreseen the bloodshed he should occasion, must he not have shuddered? He must have been better assured of his mission than I believe he was, if he thought that to save any million of souls he had a right to venture the many hundred thousands of lives that were massacred in consequence of his doctrines.

You did not probably expect, Madam, that, in answer to a how'dye I should talk to you about Luther; but I could not send a mere card of thanks in return, and let my pen make up something like a letter as it could. Nothing had happened within my beat, but the arrival of Mrs. Jordan at the theatre at Richmond, which has raised its character exceedingly: our Jews and Gentiles throng it. I have not been there, for, though I think her perfect in her walk, I cannot sit through a whole play ill performed to see her play, however excellently, in such wretched farces as *The Romp,* in which I have seen her. The weather, indeed,

tolerates all winter diversions; but then it is too cold to come back between two and three miles in the rain. The cuckoos, I believe, are still staying in town, for I have heard but one since I came to Twickenham. Surely it was some traveller that first propagated the idea of summer, which never ripens here more than grapes, unless in a *hot-house*. It struck me thirty years ago that this is the most beautiful country when framed and glazed, that is, when you look through a window with a good fire behind you.

Pray, Madam, send me an account of *les Amusemens des Eaux de Woburn*, or rather, I suppose, *des Vins*. How ancient Gertrude will regret not being there! *She* would show the brood mares to the young fillies, though you will not.

2684. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, July 2, 1789.

I almost think I shall never abuse you again; nay, I would not, did not it prove so extremely good for you. No walnut-tree is better for being threshed than you are; and, though you have won my heart by your compliance, I don't know whether my conscience will not insist on my using you ill now and then; for is there any precedent for gratitude not giving way to every other duty? Gratitude, like an earl's eldest son, is but titular, and has no place upon *trials*. But I fear I am punning sillily, instead of thanking you seriously, as I do, for allowing me to print your lovely verses[1]. My press can confer no honour; but, when I offer it, it is a certain mark of my sincerity and esteem. It has been dedicated to friendship, to charity—too often to worthless self-love; sometimes to the rarity of the pieces, and sometimes to the merit of them; now I will unite the first motive and the last.

Letter 2684.—[1] *Bonner's Ghost.*

My fall, for which you so kindly concern yourself, was not worth mentioning; for as I only bruised the muscles of my side, instead of breaking a rib, camphire infused in arquebusade took off the pain and all consequences in five or six days: and one has no right to draw on the compassion of others for what one *has* suffered and is past. Some love to be pitied on that score; but forget that they only excite, in the best natured, joy on their deliverance. You commend me too for not complaining of my chronical evil; but, my dear Madam, I should be blameable for the reverse. If I would live to seventy-two, ought I not to compound for the encumbrances of old age? And who has fewer? And who has more cause to be thankful to Providence for his lot? The gout, it is true, comes frequently, but the fits are short, and very tolerable; the intervals are full health. My eyes are perfect, my hearing but little impaired, chiefly to whispers, for which I certainly have little occasion; my spirits never fail; and though my hands and feet are crippled, I can use both, and do not wish to box, wrestle, or dance a hornpipe. In short, I am just infirm enough to enjoy all the prerogatives of old age, and to plead them against anything that I have not a mind to do. Young men must conform to every folly in fashion: drink when they had rather be sober; fight a duel if somebody else is wrong-headed; marry to please their fathers, not themselves; and shiver in a white waistcoat, because ancient almanacs, copying the Arabian, placed the month of June after May; though, when the style was reformed, it ought to have been intercalated between December and January. Indeed, I have been so childish as to cut my hay for the same reason, and am now weeping over it by the fireside. But to come to business.

You must suffer me to print two hundred copies; and if you approve it, I will send thirty to the Bishop of

London[2] out of your quota. You may afterwards give him more, if you please. I do not propose putting your name, unless you desire it; as I think it would swear with the air of ancientry you have adopted in the signature and notes. The authoress will be no secret; and as it will certainly get into magazines, why should not you deal privately beforehand with some bookseller, and have a second edition ready to appear soon after mine is finished? The difficulty of getting my edition at first, from the paucity of the number and from being only given as presents, will make the second edition eagerly sought for; and I do not see why my anticipating the publication should deprive you of the profit. Rather than do that, I would print a smaller number. I wish to raise an additional appetite to that which everybody has for your writings; I am sure I did not mean to injure you. Pray think of this; there is time enough; I cannot begin to print under a week: my press has lain fallow for some time, and my printer must prepare ink, balls, &c.; and as I have but one man, he cannot be expeditious. I seriously do advise you to have a second edition ready: why should covetous booksellers run away with *all* the advantages of your genius? They get enough by their ample share of the sale.

I will say no more, but to repeat my thanks for your consent, which truly obliges me; and I am happy to have been the instrument of preserving what your modesty would have sunk. My esteem could not increase: but one likes to be connected by favours to those one highly values.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most sincere admirer and obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

[2] Dr. Porteus.

2685. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, July 9, 1789.

You are so good and punctual, that I will complain no more of your silence, unless you are silent. You must not relax, especially till you can give me better accounts of your health and spirits. I was peevish before with the weather; but, now it prevents your riding, I forget hay and roses, and all the comforts that are washed away, and shall only watch the weather-cock for an east wind in Yorkshire. What a shame that *I* should recover from the gout and from bruises, as I assure you I am entirely, and that *you* should have a complaint left! One would think that it was *I* was grown young again; for just now, as I was reading your letter in my bedchamber, while some of my *customers* are seeing the house, I heard a gentleman in the armoury ask the housekeeper as he looked at the bows and arrows, 'Pray, does Mr. Walpole shoot?' No, nor with pistols neither. I leave all weapons to Lady Salisbury[1] and Mr. Lenox[2]; and, since my double marriage, have suspended my quiver in the Temple of Hymen. Hygeia shall be my goddess, if she will send you back blooming to this region. Lady Cecilia thinks the house at Bushy Park gate will be untenanted by the time of your return.

I wish I had preserved any correspondence in France, as you are curious about their present history; which I believe very momentous indeed. What little I have accidentally heard I will relate, and will learn what more I can. On the King's being advised to put out his talons,

Letter 2685.—[1] She was fond of archery.

[2] Charles Lennox (1764–1819), son of Lord George Lennox, and nephew of the third Duke of Richmond, whom he succeeded in 1806. He was at this time a Captain in the Coldstream Guards. On May 26, 1789, he fought a duel with the Duke of York at Wimbledon, in which neither party was wounded.

Necker desired leave to resign, as not having been consulted, and as the measure violated his plan. The people, hearing his intention, thronged to Versailles; and he was forced to assure them from a balcony that he was not to retire. I am not accurate in dates, nor warrant my intelligence, and therefore pretend only to send you detached scraps. Force being still in request, the Duc du Châtelet acquainted the King that he could not answer for the French Guards. Châtelet, who, from his hot arrogant temper, I should have thought would have been one of the proudest opposers of the people, is suspected to lean to them. In short, Marshal Broglio is appointed Commander-in-Chief, and is said to have sworn on his sword that he will not sheathe it till he has plunged it into the heart of *ce gros banquier génevois*. I cannot reconcile this with Necker's stay at Versailles. That he is playing a deep game is certain. It is reported that Madame Necker tastes previously everything he swallows. A vast camp is forming round Paris; but if the army is mutinous—the tragedy may begin on the other side. They do talk of an engagement at Metz, where the French troops, espousing the popular cause, were attacked by two German regiments, whom the former cut to pieces.

The Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, who were at Paris, have thought it prudent to leave it; and my cousin, Mr. Thomas Walpole, who is near it, has just written to his daughters that he is glad to be out of the town[3], that he may make his retreat easily.

Thus you see the crisis is advanced far beyond orations, and wears all the aspect of civil war. For can one imagine that the whole nation is converted at once, and in some measure without provocation from the King, who, far from enforcing the prerogative like Charles the First, cancelled

[3] He had a house at Clichy.

the despotism obtained for his grandfather by the Chancellor Maupeou, has exercised no tyranny, and has shown a disposition to let the constitution be amended? It did want it indeed; but I fear the present want of temper grasps at so much, that they may defeat their own purposes; and where loyalty has for ages been the predominant characteristic of a nation, it cannot be eradicated at once. Pity will soften the tone of the moment; and the nobility and clergy have more interest in wearing a royal than a popular yoke; for great lords and high-priests think the rights of mankind a defalcation of their privileges. No man living is more devoted to liberty than I am; yet blood is a terrible price to pay for it! A martyr to liberty is the noblest of characters; but to sacrifice the lives of others, though for the benefit of all, is a strain of heroism that I could never ambition.

I have just been reading Voltaire's Correspondence—one of those heroes who liked better to excite martyrs than to be one. How vain would he be if alive now! I was struck with one of his letters to La Chalotais, who was a true upright patriot and martyr too. In the 221st Letter of the sixth volume, Voltaire says to him, 'Vous avez jeté des germes qui produiront un jour plus qu'on ne pense.' It was lucky for me that you inquired about France; I had not a halfpenny-worth more of news in my wallet.

Tonton's nose is not, I believe, grown longer, but only come to light by being clipped. When his beard is recovered, I dare to say, he will be as comely as my Jupiter Serapis. In his taste he is much improved, for he eats strawberries, and is fond of them, and yet they never were so insipid from want of sun and constant rain. One may eat roses and smell to cherries, and not perceive the difference from scent or flavour. If tulips were in season, I would make a rainbow of them to give other flowers hopes of not being drowned again.

A person who was very apt to call on you every morning for a minute, and stay three hours, was with me the other day, and his grievance from the rain was the swarms of gnats. I said, I supposed I have very bad blood, for gnats never bite me. He replied, 'I believe I have bad blood too, for dull people, who would tire me to death, never come near me.' Shall I beg a palletful of that repellent for you, to set in your window as barbers do?

I believe you will make me grow a little of a newsmonger, though you are none; but I know that at a distance, in the country, letters of news are a regale. I am not wont to listen to the batteries on each side of me at Hampton Court and Richmond; but in your absence I shall turn a less deaf ear to them, in hopes of gleaning something that may amuse you: though I shall leave their manufactures of scandal for their own home consumption; you happily do not deal in such wares. Adieu! I used to think the month of September the dullest of the whole set; now I shall be impatient for it.

P.S. I am glad you are to go [to] Mrs. Cholmondely[4]; she is extremely sensible and agreeable—but I think all your particular friends that I have seen are so.

2686. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1789.

Though I am touchy enough with those I love, I did not think you dilatory, nor expect that answers to letters should be as quick as repartees. I do pity you for the

[4] Sister of Sir Harry Englefield, seventh Baronet, and wife of Mr. Cholmley, of Brandsby, Yorkshire.

Letter 2686.—A part of this letter has been collated with all that is left of the original (a mutilated fragment in possession of Mrs. Suckling), which has undergone 'editing' at the hands of Hannah More. That portion of the text beginning 'I beseech you' down to 'for I conclude' has been torn or cut away. Sentences omitted and erased by Hannah More have been deciphered and restored.

accident that made you think yourself remiss, and enjoy your patient's recovery. At first on your calling her your principal neighbour, I concluded it had been the stately Duchess[1], and almost smiled unawares at the idea of her being sopped, and coming out of the water brustling up her feathers and ermines, and assuming the dignity of a Jupiter Pluvius; but as soon as I espied the words *her husband*, I knew it was no *femme couverte*, for whom would *she* espouse but another John of Gaunt[2]?

I beseech you not to fancy yourself vain on my being your printer: would Sappho be proud, though Aldus or Elzevir were her typographer? My press has no rank but from its narrowness, that is, from the paucity of its editions, and from being a volunteer. But a truce to compliments, and to reciprocal humility. Pray tell me how I shall convey your parcel to you: the impression is begun. I shall not dare, *vu le sujet*, to send a copy to Mrs. Garrick[3]; I do not know whether you will venture. Mrs. Boscawen shall have one, but it shall be in your name; so authorize me to present it, that neither of us may tell the whitest of fibs. Shall I deliver any others for you within my reach, to save you trouble?

I have no more corrections to make. I told you brutally at first of the only two faults I found, and you sacrificed them with the patience of a martyr; for I conclude that when a good poet knowingly sins against measure twice, he is persuaded that he makes amends by greater beauties: in such case docility deserves the palm-branch. I do not applaud your declining a London edition; but you have been so tractable, that I will let you have your way in this, though you only make over profit to magazines.

[1] Elizabeth Berkeley, Dowager Duchess of Beaufort. Her country seat was Stoke Gifford, near Bristol.

[2] The Dukes of Beaufort descend from John of Gaunt.

[3] Mrs. Garrick was a Roman Catholic.

Being an honest printer myself, I have little charity for those banditti of my profession who pilfer from everybody they find on the road. Adieu, my dear Madam!

Yours most cordially and sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

P.S. Let me have one line of answer about the conveyance directly, for the edition will soon be ready.

2687. To MISS MARY BERRY.

Strawberry Hill, July 10, 1789.

How angry you will be with me, and how insincere you will think all my professions! Why, here is Lady Dudley's [1] house let under my nose, let in my own lane, and for a song! *Patienza, mie care!* I am as white as snow. It had no bill upon it, though it was advertised, but not in my newspaper, and who knows truth or falsehood but from their own paper? And who, of all the birds in the air, do you think has got it? Only the Pepys's [2]. It is true too, that had I had any inkling of the matter, I should not have inquired about it, for the rent asked was two hundred a year—but a Master in Chancery, having a nose longer than himself, went to the executors and struck a bargain of 70*l.* for four months. The land would pay the rent; but then you must have got your hay in before the rains, and you must have been wiser than I to have done that, and in hay concerns I don't know that the heads of two wives are better than that of one husband; and after all, had not you been shrewder than a Master in Chancery, it would have cost you three hundred pounds extraordinary

LETTER 2687.—Not in C.

[1] Mary, daughter of Gamaliel Fair; m. (1788) John Ward, second Viscount Dudley and Ward; d. 1810.

[2] William Weller Pepys, cr. a Baronet in 1801. His wife was Elizabeth, daughter of William Dowdeswell, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

before you could have shown your faces, as I am sure, at least, *I* should choose to have my wives appear. Why, there is poor Mrs. Pepys with not a rag of linen but the shift on her back. They sent their whole history by water. It was a most tempestuous night; the boatmen, dreading a shipwreck, cast anchor in Chelsea Reach, intending to put to sea next morning—but before daybreak pirates had carried off the whole cargo to the value, Mr. Cambridge says, of said three hundred pounds. Now, am I as false or negligent as I thought I was? You both, and Papa Berry together, could not be so mad as I was at myself at first, when I suspected that I had missed Palazzo Dudley for you.

As I keep a letter constantly on the anvil going on for you, I shall, before this gets its complement, tell you what I know more. The house of Edgcumbe set out in perilous haste to prepare the Mount for the reception of their Majesties if they are so inclined [3], but were stopped at Pool for want of post-horses, all being retained for the service of the court. The royal personages arrived, and Lady Mount was in the midst of the reiteration of her curtseys, when the mob gathering and pressing on her, she was seized with a panic, clung to her Lord, and screamed piteously, till a country fellow said to her, 'What dost thee make such a hell of a noise for? Why, nobody will touch thee.'

Passons à Paris. All I have yet learnt farther is, that the populace were going to burn the house of Monsieur d'Espremesnil [4], a Royalist. A cobbler, getting on a stand, begged their low-mightinesses to hear four reasons against wilful fire-raising: the first was, 'L'hôtel n'étoit point à M. d'Espremesnil'; second, 'Les livres n'étoient pas à lui'; third, 'Les enfans n'étoient pas à lui'; fourth and last, 'Sa femme étoit au public.' The pathetic justice of those

[3] The King and Queen visited Weymouth and Plymouth in the summer of 1789.

[4] Jean Jacques Duval d'Espremésnil, politician. He was guillotined in 1794.

arguments saved the hotel, and Monsieur d'E. keeps all those goods that do *not* belong to him.

I am sorry we have refused to supply their wants; I am for heaping coals of corn on the heads of our enemies—but truth is, it looks as if it would not be quite prudent to be so generous. The incessant and heavy rains are alarming; the corn begins to be laid, and fair weather is now wanted as much for use as for pleasure. It costs me a pint of wine a day to make my servants amends for being wet to the skin every time I go abroad. Lord and Lady Waldegrave have been with me for two days, and could not set their foot out of doors. I drank tea at Mrs. Garrick's with the Bishop of London and Mrs. Porteus, Mr. Batt, and Dr. Cadogan and his daughter, and they were all in the same predicament.

Apropos to the Bishop, I enclose a most beautiful copy of verses which Miss H. More wrote very lately when she was with him at Fulham, on his opening a walk to a bench called Bonner's. Mrs. Boscawen showed them to me, and I insisted on printing them. Only 200 copies are taken off, half for her and half for the printer, and you have one of the first. How unlike are these lines to the chymical preparations of our modern poetasters, cock and hen! who leave one with no images but of garlands of flowers and necklaces of coloured stones. Every stanza in *Bonner's Ghost* furnishes you with a theme of ideas. I have read them twenty times, and every time they improve on me. How easy, how well kept up the irony! how sensible the satire! how delicate and genteel the compliments! I hold *Jekyll*[5] and *Bonner's Ghost* perfect compositions, in their different kinds—a great deal to say when poetry has been so much exhausted.

[5] Probably *Jekyll, an Eclogue*, written to ridicule Joseph Jekyll, the wit and politician.

Wednesday, 15th.

The first part of my letter is superannuated before the second is ready. I had nothing from either of you to answer; I had no new news to send you; and Kirkgate is not *brought to bed* of *Bonner's Ghost* so soon as I had *reckoned*; so you must wait for it; and should it *appear* to you while you are at Mrs. Cholmondeley's, that is, *in partibus infidelium*, it will be decent not to scream out. Commonly it is not prudent to announce a poem with high panegyric beforehand; yet I think Bonner will answer all I have predicted of him—at least I shall be much disappointed, if you are at all.

My motive for sending this away with abortive notice is, not to delay giving you an account of the news I heard this morning. Mr. Mackinsy and Lady Betty were with me this morning, and he showed me a letter he had just received from Monsieur Dutens: a courier arrived yesterday with prodigious expedition from the Duke of Dorset—Necker had been dismissed and was thought set out for Geneva; an offer of his post was gone to Breteuil, who is in the country. Everything at Paris was in the utmost confusion, and firing of cannon for four hours there had been heard on the road. All this is confirmed by a courier from the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, who were setting out precipitately: that messenger had been stopped three times on his route, being taken for a courier from that court, but was released on pretending to be dispatched by the *Tiers État*. Madame de Calonne[6] told Dutens yesterday that the newly encamped troops desert by hundreds—but if the firing of cannon was from the Bastile, and whence else it should proceed I know not, it looks as if the King were not quite abandoned. Oh, but what a scene! How many lives of quiet innocent persons may have been sacrificed, if the artillery of the Bastile raked

[6] Calonne married the widow of a rich financier called Harveley.

that multitudinous city! I check myself, for what million of reflections present themselves.

I shall wish to send you accounts fresh and fresh, but only catch them by accident and by rebound. Miss Penn has a correspondent at Paris and showed me part of a letter thence yesterday, but I suppose few English will remain there.

We have no open enemy but St. Swithin; but if he persists in his *quarantaine*, he will be a very serious one. The Pepysian robbery was exaggerated; it is difficult to get at truth, even at a stone's-throw off.

I have scarce left myself any room for conjugal douceurs; but as you see how very constantly you are in my thoughts, I am at least not fickle—on the contrary, I am rather disposed to jealousy. You have written to Mr. Pepys, and he will have anticipated my history of his being established in Palazzo Dudley; and that will make this letter more and more wrinkled—well, he cannot send you *Bonner's Ghost*, and I shall have the satisfaction of tantalizing you four or five days longer—if this is not love, the deuce is in it: does one grudge that the beloved object should be pleased by any one but oneself, unless beloved object there be? Do not be terrified however; jealousy most impartially divided between two can never come to great violence. Wife Agnes has indeed given me no cause, but my affection for both is so compounded into one love, that I can think of neither separately. Frenchmen often call their mistress *mes Amours*, which would be no Irish in me. Apropos, Lady Lucan told me t'other day of two young Irish couple who ran away from Dublin, and landed in Wales, and were much surprised to find that Holyhead was not Gretna Green. Adieu! mes Amours!

P.S. Well, are not you charmed with *Bonner's Ghost*? Oh, I forget; you have not seen it yet—how tantalizing!

2688. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday night [July 15, 1789].

I write a few lines only to confirm the truth of much of what you will read in the papers from Paris. Worse may already be come, or is expected every hour.

Mr. Mackenzie and Lady Betty called on me before dinner, after the post was gone out; and he showed me a letter from Dutens, who said two couriers arrived yesterday from the Duke of Dorset and the Duchess of Devonshire, the latter of whom was leaving Paris directly. Necker had been dismissed, and was thought to be set out for Geneva. Breteuil, who was at his country-house, had been sent for to succeed him. Paris was in an uproar; and, after the couriers had left it, firing of cannon was heard for four hours together. That must have been from the Bastile, as probably the *Tiers État* were not so provided. It is shocking to imagine what may have happened in such a thronged city! One of the couriers was stopped twice or thrice, as supposed to pass from the King; but redeemed himself by pretending to be dispatched by the *Tiers État.* Madame de Calonne told Dutens that the newly encamped troops desert by hundreds.

Here seems the egg to be hatched, and imagination runs away with the idea. I may fancy I shall hear of the King and Queen leaving Versailles, like Charles the First, and then skips imagination six-and-forty years lower, and figures their fugitive Majesties taking refuge in this country. I have besides another idea. If the Bastile conquers, still is it impossible, considering the general spirit in the country, and the numerous fortified places in France, but some may be seized by the *dissidents*[1], and whole provinces be torn

Letter 2688. — [1] Probably an allusion to the Polish Protestants, who were called Dissidents, and who had no political liberty.

from the crown? On the other hand, if the King prevails, what heavy despotism will the *États*, by their want of temper and moderation, have drawn on their country! They might have obtained many capital points, and removed great oppression. No French monarch will ever summon *États* again, if this moment has been thrown away.

Though I have stocked myself with such a set of visions for the event either way, I do not pretend to foresee what will happen. Penetration argues from reasonable probabilities; but chance and folly are apt to contradict calculation, and hitherto they seem to have full scope for action. One hears of no genius on either side, nor do symptoms of any appear. There will, perhaps: such times and tempests bring forth, at least bring out, great men. I do not take the Duke of Orléans or Mirabeau to be built *du bois dont on les fait*; no, nor Monsieur Necker. He may be a great traitor, if he made the confusion designedly: but it is a woful evasion, if the promised financier slips into a black politician! I adore liberty, but I would bestow it as honestly as I could; and a civil war, besides being a game of chance, is paying a very dear price for it.

For us, we are in most danger of a deluge; though I wonder we so frequently complain of long rains. The saying about St. Swithin is a proof of how often they recur; for proverbial sentences are the children of experience, not of prophecy. Good night! In a few days I shall send you a beautiful little poem from the Strawberry Press.

2689. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, July 16, 1789.

As my own exchequer is empty, Madam, I chose to wait before I replied to your last, till I could offer you something

of another coin. The enclosed copy of verses pleased me so much, that, though not intended for publication, I prevailed on the authoress, Miss Hannah More, to allow me to take off a small number. Though I am an old printer retired from business, one cannot help now and then rubbing up one's old calling to oblige a friend, and as your Ladyship used to deal at my shop, I thought it my duty to present you with this small tribute in acknowledgement of former favours, and hope you will receive it favourably from your ancient tradesman. Perhaps you will smile at a printer talking of his exchequer; but as all orders entrench on the style of those above them, while the highest ranks sink so low that the King of France is a bankrupt, I do not think it too assuming for an old printer to talk of his till being at as low ebb as a royal treasury.

It is a very truth that I have nothing to say. The civil war in France does not proceed half fast enough to supply correspondence; and our own halcyon days are most unfruitful of events. Lord and Lady Waldegrave have been with me for two days, and are going to Scarborough: we had nothing but rain to talk on and lament the whole time. *Bonner's Ghost* must therefore supply the place of a letter, and I wish I could often make such amends: your Ladyship would be a prodigious gainer, and so should I too: it would be worth my while to keep shop in earnest, if I could often have such wares to vend. I do think I have some merit with that tiny commonwealth, that proudly calls itself the republic of letters (and which, like Cromwell's House of Lords, is often composed of the dregs of the earth), for having, sometimes almost by force, obtained for the public works of intrinsic value or rarity. I shall sit mighty low on the bench of authors; but Kirgate and I shall not give place to many printers in the offices of the temple of fame.

18th.

I have been disappointed of the completion of *Bonner's Ghost*, by my rolling press being out of order, and was forced to send the whole impression to town to have the copper-plate taken off. In the meantime, the civil war in France, I find, has taken gigantic steps, and is grown out of all proportion to the size of a letter; besides, I know nothing authentic, nor can learn truth here. How strange it is to me to have lived to see what I have seen! sights that the most microscopic eye of penetration could not have discovered in embryo! America lost and settled in a Republic, the Jesuits annihilated and convents abolished by the house of Austria, all France enthusiastic for liberty! and in how few years since despotism had been established there! But I look on the present revolution in that country as a temporary paroxysm that will not last; and I grieve for the calamities which such violent transitions will inflict!—but I will not pretend to foretell, having nothing of the prophet but ignorance, without the inspiration.

At night.

Kirgate has brought the whole impression, and I shall have the pleasure of sending your Ladyship this with a *Bonner's Ghost* to-morrow morning. I shall carry the quota that Miss More has destined to the Bishop of London to him on Monday morning, and shall sit in Bonner's chair.

2690. To Miss Mary Berry.

Ex Officinâ Arbutianâ, July 19, 1789.

Such unwriting wives I never knew! and a shame it is for an author, and what is more, for a printer, to have a couple so unletteral. I can find time amidst all the hurry

Letter 2690.—Not in C.

of my shop to write small quartos to them continually. In France, where nuptiality is not the virtue most in request, a wife will write to her consort, though the *doux billet* should contain but two sentences, of which I will give you a precedent. A lady sent the following to her spouse: 'Je vous écris, parce que je n'ai rien à faire; et je finis, parce que je n'ai rien à vous dire.' I do not wish for quite so laconic a *poulet*; besides, your Ladyships *can* write. Mrs. Damer dined here yesterday, and had just heard from you. Brevity, Mesdames, may be catching—don't pretend not to care, for you are dying for news from France, but not a spoonful shall you have from me to-day; and if I was not a man of honour, though a printer, and had not promised you *Bonner's Ghost*, I would be as silent as if I were in Yorkshire. Remember too, that Miss Hannah More, though not so proper for the French Embassador's *fête* as Miss Gunning[1], can teach Greek and Latin as well as any young lady in the north of England, and might make as suitable a companion for a typographer. I will say no more, for this *shall* be a short note.

Sunday night, late.

I break my word to myself, though you do not deserve it, for I have had no letter to-day from either of you, and now can have none till Tuesday; but I am just come from Richmond, where I have seen an authentic account of the horrible scene at Paris. There had been dismal accounts for three days, but I hoped they had been exaggerated. They are too true. The Duc de Luxembourg[2] and his family are arrived

[1] Elizabeth, only child of General John Gunning, and niece of Elizabeth Gunning, Duchess of Argyll. In 1791 Miss Gunning became notorious in connection with her own and her mother's attempts to prove that the Marquises of Lorne and Blandford had offered her marriage. Both the so-called suitors denied the truth of Miss Gunning's statement, and she remained single till 1803, when she married a Major Plunkett.

[2] Charles Emanuel Sigismond de Montmorency (1774–1861), Duc de Luxembourg.

in London, having escaped with difficulty, 300,000 livres being set on his head, as the same sum is on Marshal Broglie's, and 500,000 on the Comte d'Artois's. The people rose on this day sennight, seized all the arms they could find, searched convents, found stores of corn, and obliged the monks to deal it out at reasonable prices. They have beheaded the *Lieutenant de Police*[3], or the *Prévôt des Marchands*[4], or both, and attacked the Bastile, which the governor[5] refused to surrender; and on the populace rushing in, he fired on them with four great guns loaded with nails, and killed 300 or 400, but they mastered him, and dragged him and his major to the Place de Grève, and chopped off their hands and heads. The *bourgeoisie*, however, have disarmed the mob, but have seized the arsenal, and the Hôtel de Ville and the treasure there, which they destine to pay the sums for the heads of the proscribed.

On Wednesday the King with only his two brothers went to the Assemblée Nationale, and offered to concur with them in any measures for restoring order. They returned him an answer by eighty deputies, but the result is not known. The Duke of Dorset's courier is not arrived, nobody, it is supposed, being suffered to go out of the city.

Marshal Broglie is encamped before Versailles with 25,000 men, who are said ready to support the King.

You will want to ask a thousand questions, which I could not answer—nor will I when I can, if neither of you will write to me.

I dined to-day at Mrs. Walsingham's with the Pen-hood, and to-morrow I am to carry thirty *Ghosts* to the Bishop of

[3] Louis Thiroux de Crosne; this was a false report. He was guillotined in 1794.

[4] Jacques de Flesselles (1721–1789). He was detected in a correspondence with the court, and committed to prison. He had hardly reached the bottom of the steps at the Hôtel de Ville, when he was shot, and his head paraded on a pike.

[5] Bernard René Jourdan, styled de Launey (1740–1789); his Fort Major was named De Losme.

London. So I am finishing this at past midnight, and shall send it before I go to Mr. Ellis to be franked.

These two days have been very fine, and I trust have restored riding in Yorkshire. If I ever do receive another letter, I hope it will give me an account of restored health, for my anger is but a grain of mustard in comparison of my solicitude. Good night! good night!

2691. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, Monday night, July 20, 1789.

My excellent Friend,

I never shall be angry with your conscientiousness, though I will not promise never to scold it, as you know I think you sometimes carry it too far; and how pleasant to have a friend to scold on such grounds! I see all your delicacy in what you call your *double treachery*, and your kind desire of connecting two of your friends. The seeds are sprung up already; and the Bishop has already condescended to make me the first, and indeed so unexpected a visit, that, had I in the least surmised it, I should certainly, as became me, have prevented him. One effect, however, I can tell you your pimping between us will have: his Lordship has, to please your partiality, flattered me so agreeably in the letter you *betrayed*, that I shall never write to you again without the dread of attempting the wit he is so liberal as to bestow on me; and then either way I must be dull or affected, though I hope to have the grace to prefer the former, and then you only will be the sufferer, as we both should by the latter. But I will come to facts: they are plain bodies, can have nothing to do with wit, and yet are not dull to those who have anything to do with them.

According to your order I have delivered *Ghosts* to Mrs. Boscawen, Mrs. Garrick, Lady Juliana Penn, Mrs. Wal-

singham, and Mr. Pepys. Mr. Batt, I am told, leaves London to-day; so I shall reserve his to his return. This morning I carried his thirty to the Bishop of London, who said modestly he should not have expected above ten. I was delighted with the Palace, with the venerable chapel, and its painted episcopalities in glass, and the brave hall, &c., &c. Though it rained, I would crawl to Bonner's chair. In short, my satisfaction would have been complete, but for wanting the presence of that Jesuitess, the 'Good Old Papist[1].'

To-morrow departs for London, to be delivered to the Bristol coach at the White Horse Cellar in Piccadilly, a parcel containing sixty-four *Ghosts*, one of which is printed on brown for your own eating. There is but one more such, so you may preserve it like a relic. I know these two are not so good as the white: but, as rarities, a collector would give ten times more for them; and *uniquity* will make them valued more than the charming poetry. I believe, if there was but one ugly woman in the world, she would occasion a longer war than Helen did. You will find the Bishop's letter in the parcel. I did not breathe a hint of my having seen it, as I could not conjure up into my pale cheeks the blush I ought to exhibit on such flattery.

I pity you most sincerely for your almost drowned guest. Fortune seems to delight in throwing poor *Louisas* in your way, that you may exercise your unbounded charity and benevolence. Adieu! pray write. I need not *write* to you to *pray*; but I wish, when your knees have what the common people call a worky-day, you would employ your hands the whole time.

Yours most cordially,

Hor. Walpole.

Letter 2691. — [1] Hannah More herself, who signed her poem *Bonner's Ghost* 'A Good Old Papist.'

P.S. I believe I have blundered, and that your knees would call a week-day a holiday.

2692. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, July 22, 1789.

My letter on Sunday passed your Ladyship's in the very town of Twickenham, and, I fear, without making a bow to it; however, it will make my apology for not answering incontinently your *quaere* on the identity of parts of *La Galerie de l'Ancienne Cour*, and *Les Mémoires de St. Simon*, which struck me too. The case, I believe, was, that the Duc de Choiseul, while minister, had a copy of the latter made, which I was promised by the Duchesse I should read; but his fall intervened, and the Duchesse de Grammont, his sister (which I could not blame), advised him not to let me have it then, as his having ordered a transcript for himself had been a pretty bold act, the MS. having been seized and deposited with the state papers. On the cessation of the persecution of Choiseul, he used to lend the transcript to persons who visited him at Chanteloup, and some of them, I have been told, made extracts, which strayed into the book your Ladyship mentions.

How the Dukes, either of St. Simon or Choiseul, would stare at the present Galerie de la Cour, and the precipitate fall of the Bourbons! I have not at all digested my surprise; but being very uncertain whether a quarter of what I have heard here is true, I will not make reflections blindfold, but will obey my old maxim, *wait for the echo*; and as I conclude all France is gone mad at once, because I know not how to believe that a whole nation is come to its senses at once (which is far more unprecedented), I propose to wait for a reduplication of echoes; and if I do not live to hear the last, I shall not less expect that it will vary from the

present reverberation. Amongst other questions which I am going to answer, you are pleased to kindly ask, Madam, how the late deluges, to which there is a codicil at this moment, have agreed with me. Thank you, astonishingly well; I am better in health than I have been these three years, and my sleep, *my* weather-glass, is but sounder and longer for going to bed half an hour sooner than I used to do. Accordingly, seventy-two is very grateful to the gout.

I did not see the verses in the *Morning Herald*: they are an excellent parody, and I fancy I guess the parodist.

I return the letter with many thanks, too, and am grateful to the gout, for, as it has preserved all my teeth, though I am so old, I am in no danger, like Mr. Layton, of being made Secretary of State, were it even as common in this country to choose great officers for having lost their teeth, as for not having cut them. If Mr. Layton is already disgraced, I suppose his Imperial Majesty of Morocco repents, like his brother Louis, of having employed a Protestant as his minister, who, perhaps, had advised him to call an assembly of *les États à la façon de Barbarie françoise*. I am shocked at the African cruelties exercised at Paris! but sudden and novel power is apt to be as tyrannous as the veteran, and more too; and nations may take violent prejudices for and against their kings, and alternately, without any cause obvious to the eye of a bystander.

I have certainly seen the most unfortunate of all mothers upon earth, as soon as I could: it was not a moment to neglect one for whom I have so much regard. The blow was very near killing her. She is but lately come to Twickenham, and looks as deplorably as you may imagine, Madam. Where the wretched pair are I know not. The wife, whose patience and conduct have proved her a prodigy of discretion, is gone to her father, and has a jointure of 800*l.* a year. Dreadful as her case is, still she is the least

to be pitied, for time may assuage her grief; and the esteem of the world will reward her innocence: but there being no resource for the guilty pair, their miseries can only increase; and, consequently, the mother must always suffer for what they have brought on themselves, and to which she can never be insensible.

I have answered your Ladyship's interrogatories as fully as I could, and will take my leave; hoping you admire *Bonner's Ghost*, which will not lose any of its beauties, even if you read it often.

2693. To Mrs. Carter.

Dear Madam, Strawberry Hill, July 25, 1789.

I have the pleasure of sending you a little present, that I venture to say will be very agreeable to you. It was written by Miss More at her late visit to the Bishop of London. Mrs. Boscawen showed it to me, and I was so charmed that I wrote immediately to the authoress and insisted on printing a few copies, to which with meek modesty she consented, though she had not any such intention. The more I read it, the more I like it; it is so perfect, that I do not think a word could be amended, and yet it has all the ease and freedom of a sketch. The sense, satire, irony, and compliments have all their complete merit.

As I love to extract some satisfaction out of grievances, I hope that this bad summer has been favourable to your headaches. I hope, too, that the almost incessant rains have not damaged the corn and hops in your county. It ought to be a consolation to us, too, that the badness of the season has been our greatest calamity, while such tragic scenes have been acting in France, and perhaps may continue to be extended in that country. Were they to stop now, it

would not be without such a humiliation of the house of Bourbon as must be astonishing. Their government was certainly a very bad one; but I cannot conceive that such a sudden and tumultuary revolution can at once produce a good and permanent constitution, when not only all the principles and spirit of the nation must be changed, but the whole system of their laws and usages too, and where the rights and privileges of the various provinces are so discordant and so different. The military, though that is extraordinary, may have been seized with this rapid enthusiasm—but are as likely to revert to their old spirit—and if the royal power is in a manner annihilated, will the nobility and clergy escape? If they are preserved from fear, will the people be much relieved? And if those two bodies are crushed, how long will the popular government be tranquil? I pretend to no authentic information on what is passing, and less to penetration; but I do not conceive that the whole frame and machine of a vast country can be overturned and resettled by a *coup de baguette*, though all the heads in it have been changed as much as when millions of Goths invaded nations and exterminated the inhabitants.

Excuse this vague speculation, but for this last week I have heard of nothing else but this strange revolution. Nobody can talk on any other subject.

I am, &c.,

Hor. Walpole.

P.S. I must add a few words of reflection. What a lesson ought this great convulsion to be to politicians! France, esteemed the most stable of all governments, has plunged itself into this catastrophe by its intrigues. By wasting its treasures to embroil other countries, it embarrassed its finances; the war to deprive us of America

increased its debt: the pursuit of a marine to rise on our fall swelled that debt. A reform became expedient, and disgusted the nobility who were at the head of all regiments. Soldiers only make risings and riots; they are generals and colonels who make rebellions. I need pursue my reflections no further.

2694. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, July 29, 1789.

I have received two dear letters from you of the 18th and 25th; and though you do not accuse me, but say a thousand kind things to me in the most agreeable manner, I allow my ancientry, and that I am an old, fond, jealous, and peevish husband, and quarrel with you if I do not receive a letter exactly at the moment I please to expect one. You talk of mine; but if you knew how I like yours, you would not wonder that I am impatient, and even unreasonable in my demands. However, though I own my faults, I do not mean to correct them. I have such pleasure in *your* letters (I am sorry I am here forced to speak in the *singular number*, which by the way is an Iricism), that I *will* be cross if you do not write to me perpetually. The quintessence of your last but one was, in telling me you are better: how fervently do I wish to receive such accounts every post. But who can mend but old I, in such detestable weather?—not one hot day; and, if a morning shines, the evening closes with a heavy shower.

The first object in my thoughts being a house for you, which I cannot find yet, I will only say that Lady Cecilia tells me that she has acquainted you that that at Bushy Gate may be had most reasonably—pho! but when?—at the end of September! I told her she was horridly mistaken, and that it is by the end of August you will want one. She would not have been in such an error if she had

calculated by a certain almanac in my heart. Mr. Conway and Lady Ailesbury are to be with her to-day, and Mrs. Damer to-morrow; but by General Conway's indecision, and not knowing when they should come this waywards, I shall not see them on either of these days, having invited my sister[1], Mr. Churchill, and their daughter Sophia and Mr. Walpole, to come to me precisely for these two days; nay, and on Friday I am to dine with the Bishop of London.

Of French news I can give you no fresher or more authentic account than you can collect in general from the newspapers; but my present visitants and everybody else confirm the veracity of Paris being in that anarchy that speaks the populace domineering in the most cruel and savage manner, and which a servile multitude broken loose calls liberty; and which in all probability will end, when their Massaniello-like reign is over, in their being more abject slaves than ever; and chiefly by the crime of their *États*, who, had they acted with temper and prudence, might have obtained from their poor undesigning King a good and permanent constitution. Who may prove their tyrant, if reviving loyalty does not in a new frenzy force him to be so, it is impossible to foresee; but much may happen first. The rage seems to gain the provinces, and threatens to exhibit the horrors of those times when the peasants massacred the gentlemen. Thus you see I can only conjecture, which is not sending you news; and my intelligence reaches me by so many rebounds, that you must not depend on anything I can tell you. I repeat, because I hear; but draw on you for no credit. Having experienced last winter, in superaddition to a long life of experience, that in Berkeley Square I could not trust to a single report from Kew[2], can I swallow implicitly at

LETTER 2694. — [1] Lady Mary Churchill.

[2] The King was removed to Kew during his attack of insanity.

Twickenham the distorted information that comes from Paris through the medium of London?

You asked me in one of your letters who La Chalotais[3] was. I answer, *premier président* or *avocat général*, I forget which, of the Parliament of Bretagne; a great, able, honest, and most virtuous man, who opposed the Jesuits and the tyranny of the Duc d'Aiguillon; but he was as indiscreet as he was good. Calonne was his friend and confidant; to whom the imprudent patriot trusted, by letter, his farther plan of opposition and designs. The wretch pretended to have business with, or to be sent for by, the Duc de la Vrillière, Secretary of State, a courtier-wretch, whose mistress used to sell *lettres de cachet* for a louis. Calonne was left to wait in the antechamber; but being, as he said, suddenly called in to the minister, as he was reading (a most natural soil for such a lecture) the letter of his friend, he by a second *natural* inadvertence left the fatal letter on the chimney-piece. The consequence, much more *natural*, was, that La Chalotais was committed to the Château du Taureau, a horrible dungeon on a rock in the sea, with his son, whose legs mortified there, and the father was doomed to the scaffold; but the Duc de Choiseul sent a counter-reprieve by an express and a cross-road, and saved him. At the beginning of this reign he was restored. Paris, however, was so indignant at the treachery, that this Calonne was hissed out of the theatre when I was in that capital. When I heard, some years after, that a Calonne was made *contrôleur général*, I concluded it must be a son, not conceiving that so reprobated a character could emerge to such a height; but asking my sister, who has been in France since I was, she assured me it was not only the identic being, but that when she was at Metz, where I think he was *intendant*, the officers in garrison would not dine

[3] See note 1 on letter to Selwyn of Dec. 2, 1765.

with him. When he fled hither for an asylum, I did not talk of his story till I saw it in one of the pamphlets that were written against him in France, and that came over hither.

Friday night, 31st.

My company prevented my finishing this: part left me at noon, the residue are to come to-morrow. To-day I have dined at Fulham along with Mrs. Boscawen; but St. Swithin played the devil so, that we could not stir out of doors, and had fires to chase the watery spirits. Quin, being once asked if he had ever seen so bad a winter, replied, 'Yes, just such an one last summer!'—and here is its youngest brother!

Mrs. Boscawen saw a letter from Paris to Miss Sayer this morning, which says Necker's son-in-law[4] was arrived, and had announced his father-in-law's promise of return from Basle. I do not know whether his honour or ambition prompt this compliance; surely not his discretion. I am much acquainted with him, and do not hold him great and profound enough to quell the present anarchy. If he attempts to moderate for the King, I shall not be surprised if he falls another victim to tumultuary jealousy and outrage. All accounts agree in the violences of the mob against the inoffensive as well as against the objects of their resentment; and in the provinces, where even women are not safe in their houses. The hôtel of the Duc du Châtelet, lately built and superb, has been assaulted, and the furniture sold by auction; but a most shocking act of a royalist in Burgundy, who is said to have blown up a committee of forty persons, will probably spread the flames of civil rage much wider. When I read the account I did not believe it; but the Bishop says he hears the *États* have required the King to write to every foreign power not to harbour

[4] The Baron de Staël-Holstein, married to Mlle. Necker in 1786.

the execrable author, who is fled: I fear this conflagration will not end as rapidly as that in Holland!

I have left myself no room but for a codicil of scraps. Mrs. Damer will be with me to-morrow. With the Pepys's I have had small dealings yet, from his Chancery and the House of Lords. Lady Jul. Penn had a very bad fall downstairs about a week ago at Windsor, and was much bruised, but with no other bad consequences. The wife Agnes's pen lies fallow, I hope her pencil does not. I will write but to one if but one will write to me, and I will not keep a new name I have just assumed, that of

HORACE FONDLEWIVES.

P.S. Mrs. Greville is dead.

2695. To JOHN PINKERTON.

Strawberry Hill, July 31, 1789.

HAVING had my house full of relations till this evening, I could not answer the favour of your letter sooner; and now I am ashamed of not being able to tell you that I have finished reading your *Essay on the Ancient History of Scotland.* I am so totally unversed in the story of original nations, and I own always find myself so little interested in savage manners unassisted by individual characters, that, though *you* lead me with a firmer hand than any historian through the dark tracts, the clouds close round me the moment I have passed them, and I retain no memory of the ground I have trod. I greatly admire your penetration, and read with wonder your clear discovery of the kingdom of Strathclyde; but, though I bow to you, as I would to the founder of an empire, I confess I do not care a straw about your subjects, with whom I am no more acquainted than with the ancient inhabitants of Otaheite. Your origin of the Piks is most able; but then I cannot remember them with

any precise discrimination from any other hyperborean nation: and all the barbarous names at the end of the first volume, and the gibberish in the Appendix, was to me as unintelligible as if I repeated Abracadabra; and made no impression on me but to raise respect of your patience, and admire a sagacity that could extract meaning and *suite* from what seemed to me the most indigestible of all materials. You rise in my estimation in proportion to the disagreeable mass of your ingredients. What gave me pleasure that I felt, was the exquisite sense and wit of your introduction; and your masterly handling and confutation of the Macphersons, Whitaker, &c., there and through your work. Objection I have but one, I think you make yourself too much a party against the Celts—I do not think they were or are worthy of hatred.

Upon the whole, dear Sir, you see that your work is too learned and too deep for my capacity and shallow knowledge. I have told you that my reading and knowledge is and always was trifling and superficial, and never taken up or pursued but for present amusement. I always was incapable of dry and unentertaining studies; and of all studies the origin of nations never was to my taste. Old age and frequent disorders have dulled both my curiosity and attention, as well as weakened my memory; and I cannot fix my attention to long deductions. I say to myself, 'What is knowledge to me, who stand on the verge, and must leave any old stores as well as what I may add to them; and how little could that be?'

Having thus confessed the truth, I am sure you are too candid and liberal to be offended: you cannot doubt of my high respect for your extraordinary abilities: I am even proud of having discovered them of myself without any clue. I should be very insincere, if I pretended to have gone through with eagerness your last work, which demands

more intense attention than my age, eyes, and avocations will allow. I cannot read long together; and you are sensible that your work is not a book to be read by snatches and intervals; especially as the novelty, to me at least, requires some helps to connect it with the memory.

2696. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 4, 1789.

I have had my house so filled lately by detachments of my family, that I had not a moment's time to answer your Ladyship's last.

For myself, I can say that I am not glad, in your Ladyship's sense of the words, that *Monsieur de la Fayette governs France instead of their King*; nor do my principles lead me at all to approve of government violently wrenched, or violently exercised by anybody; nor do I believe that Monsieur de la Fayette's government will be lasting. I still less like liberty displayed by massacre, and without legal trials; and abhor the savage barbarity that the French have always shown on all commotions. The factions in the reign of Charles VI, the St. Bartélemi, and the Ligue, were all ferociously cruel; and their bearing the heads of those they have now murdered in triumph, is of a piece with their tearing the heart of the Maréchal d'Ancre with their teeth.

The *États Généraux* are, in my opinion, the most culpable. The King had restored their whole constitution, which all France has so idolized; and he was ready to amend that constitution. But the *États*, with no sense, prudence, or temper, and who might have obtained a good government, and perhaps permanently, set out with such violence to overturn the whole frame, without its being possible to replace it at once with a sound model entirely new, and the

reverse of every law and custom of their whole country—have deposed not only their King, but, I should think, their own authority, for they are certainly now trembling before the populace, and have let loose havoc through every province, which sooner or later will end in worse despotism than that they have demolished. Weak their late monarch is, I have no doubt, and irresolute; but I cannot look on a King, who offers to soften and meliorate a constitution, as deserving to be compared with those princes who have encroached on the liberties of their people.

Give me leave to conclude this chapter, Madam, with observing, that acute as you intended your present of Monsieur de la Fayette to me for my hero, I presume to think my principles as sound and as free from prejudice, faction, and personality as those of persons who, from pique to some or partiality to others, applaud or condemn wholesale whatever can be wire-drawn into a kind of parallel.

It is out of respect that I have presumed to defend myself, Madam, against your sarcasm on Lord Ossory and myself. When ladies are politicians, and love to attack, like the unfortunate Camilla in Virgil, it is irreverent not to skirmish with them a little. Lord Ossory, like an ill-bred husband, is not so attentive, but in silence lets you ascribe to him what bad notions you please; but he is so temperate and reasonable, that I am persuaded his sentiments on French politics are not very different from mine.

In one point I perfectly agree with your Ladyship: every morning when I wake, and France rushes on my mind, I think I have been dreaming; nor can I at once conceive so total an inversion of a whole nation's character. Perhaps it is but a bloody fashion, momentary, like their other modes; and when they have deposed their monarch, or worse, and committed ten thousand outrages, they will rebound to loyalty, and out of penitence confer on whoever

shall be their king, unbounded power of punishing their excesses.

I did see, and wondered, Madam, at the republication of the long-forgotten verses on *The Three Vernons*, printed so inaccurately that I conclude somebody wrote them down by memory; for both sense or metre is destroyed in two or three places. Now, of such idle trifles, the greatest merit is to be correct; but every author, however averse to pretensions, exposes himself to being exhibited in still worse colours than he deserves; which is one of the many reasons that makes me regret having been of the calling.

General Fitzwilliam is dead, after a dreadful series of sufferings. He is worth 100,000*l.*; 500*l.* a year he leaves to his nephew the Viscount; 500*l.* apiece to Lord Dover, Lord Frederic Cavendish, General Conway, and the two Darrels, gentlemen of Richmond, his neighbours: near 300*l.* a year to his late wife's woman, a very meritorious servant. All the rest as residuary legatee to his own gentleman, who had no less merit—yet 45,000*l.*, the lowest computation of the bequest, is a prodigious recompense. My neighbour Lady Charleville, very rich too, has left a more palatable will, and left various legacies and annuities, the latter all to centre in her heir-at-law; but I scarce know the legatees even by name. Mrs. Greville is dead, too, in this district, who, I believe, had little to leave; I do not know whether even any poetry.

P.S. I forgot in my last to mention an observation that struck me on reading the excellent parody on some lines of Pope which your Ladyship sent me. It was, that in the original *chiefs out of war* is not English, nor would be intelligible without the conclusion of the line, *statesmen out of place*, which tells one that he meant *chiefs out of employment.*

2697. To Joseph Cooper Walker [1].

Sir, Strawberry Hill, Aug. 5, 1789.

I have received from Mr. Ouseley the parcel and letter with which you have been so good as to favour me. I am not only extremely obliged to you, but much ashamed that my trifling writings should have taken up so much valuable time of a gentleman who generally employs it so much better for the information and entertainment of the public, and I am sure for mine, who have received both from your essay on the Irish dress, and now that on the Irish stage.

Happy would it have been for me, Sir, to have received your communications and instructions a few years ago, when I should gladly have made use of them, which I can scarce flatter myself now I shall have an opportunity of doing. I have no thoughts of reprinting my *Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors*; and as I republished my *Anecdotes of Painting* in five small volumes but three years ago, it would be too much vanity and presumption, at the age of seventy-two, to expect that another edition could be wanted during my life. However, as the latter may be useful to artists, and consequently may some time or other be wanted, I will insert in my own copy the notices that will improve it, and especially your corrections, which are always most welcome to me. On some passages in your letter I will trouble you further with a few words. The picture of Petitot by himself was perhaps the very fine one which Mr. Welbore Ellis procured from Ireland not many years ago for the late Duchess of Portland, and which her Grace bequeathed to her friend Mrs. Delany, who has since left it to her nephew, Mr. Dewes [2].

Letter 2697.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Mrs. Alfred Morrison.

[1] An Irish antiquary; d. 1810.

[2] The miniature mentioned above was bequeathed by Mrs. Delany to

The inedited poem of Lord Essex Mr. Ouseley has been so obliging as to offer me a sight of; a favour I shall gladly accept when I go to London.

The anecdotes of Jervas I shall be happy to see, whenever you are at leisure, Sir, to oblige me with them.

I am not acquainted with a painter called *M*iles Hussey; it is, perhaps, a mere error of a letter for Giles Hussey, a great draftsman, who, I believe, died since my last edition, and whom I have briefly mentioned in the addenda to my fourth volume of that impression.

The lady's[3] opinion of Simnel and Warbeck being the same person I must beg leave, Sir, to question. The first was spared, and disgracefully employed in the kitchen of Henry VII. As the King got both into his power, had Simnel escaped or died, would not Henry have urged it on the appearance of the latter? If Simnel survived till then, they could not be the same. I mention these objections, Sir, as they occur to me, but with the utmost respect to the noble lady who suggested the opinion, and who I find, like you, Sir, is too favourable to my tragedy, which I did not intend should become so public, when I imprudently printed a small number of copies of it. The subject is inexcusably disgusting, and I can only prove that I am sensible of that and other faults by suppressing it as far as is now in my power.

The Marchioness of Buckingham, I know, has also done signal honour to my little romantic story. I was last year on the point of going to visit her Ladyship's picture on that subject, of which I have heard great encomiums, but was unluckily prevented by the gout, to which I am very subject, and which, added to my age, confines me much at

Lady Weymouth, daughter of her old friend the Duchess of Portland.

[3] Probably the Countess of Moira, whose letters to Bishop Percy, printed in Nichols's *Illustrations of Literature* (vol. viii. pp. 1–23), testify to her interest in historical subjects.

home, and warns me not to indulge any distant visions. Still less could I expect the very flattering civilities that, though a total stranger to both, I have received from you, Sir, and Mr. Ouseley. I am extremely grateful to both, though conscious of their being much too partial, and am with great respect and esteem, Sir, his and

Your most obedient

And obliged humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2698. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawb., Thursday night, Aug. 6, 1789.

By your letter of 1st and 3rd, which I received this morning, you surprise me by complaining of my silence, when I thought I had talked your *eyes* to death. If I did pause, it was to give you time to answer. Here is a list of talks since you left London:—June 27, 30, July 3, 4 (to Miss A.), 9, 16, 19, 31. If eight letters, and those no scraps, in less than forty days, are not the deeds of something more than a correspondent, I wish I may never be in love again. If you have not received all these, the devil take the post-house at York! By your answers I should not think above one had miscarried, which was about Mrs. Shakerley's house, to which I do not remember you replied. I did not think it would suit you.

I am not going to complain again, but to lament. I now find I shall not see you before the end of September—a month later than I expected would be nothing to an old husband, but it is a century to a husband that is old. Mrs. Damer (who passed Saturday and Sunday here with her parents) and I settled it with them that Mr. Berry and you two should meet us at Park Place the beginning of

LETTER 2698.—Not in C.

September. Now you will make me hate that month more than ever. Long evenings without a fire are tiresome, and without two wives insupportable!

Major Dixon[1] was here too, and on Sunday the Johnstones and Mrs. Grenville dined and passed the whole day with us. On Monday the Conways went to Ealing: the Duke[2] is gone to Inverary, but returns the beginning of ugly September to carry the Duchess to Italy; and she, who, poor woman, loves a train, carries Lady Augusta and Mr. Clavering with them. She is very ill indeed.

I have not a penful of news for you; no, though Mr. Cambridge was here this morning. The arrival of Necker, I suppose, has suspended the horrors of Paris for a moment, till the mob find that he does not propose to crown them all in the room of their late King. I shall go to London to-morrow for one night, yet I am not likely to see anybody that knows much authentic.

General Fitzwilliam is dead, at Richmond; extremely rich. He has not, I believe, extremely disappointed his nephew the Viscount, who did not depend upon hopes that had been thrown out to him, nor is much surprised that the General's upper servant and his late wife's woman are the principal heirs, as the Abbé Nichols and others long foresaw. Lord Fitzwilliam has only an estate of 550*l.* a year. The man-servant, whom he originally took a shoeless boy in Wales playing on the harp, will have above 40,000*l.*: the woman 300*l.* a year in long annuities. A will, however, pleases one, you know, if it pleases one anyhow. To General Conway (an old fellow-servant in the late Duke of Cumberland's family, as were Lord Dover and Lord Frederic Cavendish, similar legatees) he has given 500*l.* This is so much to my mind that I shall not haggle about the rest of the will.

[1] Edward Jerningham, the poet. [2] Of Argyll.

I am rejoiced that you do not go to York races. Whatever I do myself, I should not like to have the P. of Wales have two or *three* wives. Believe me, who have some cause for knowing, there is nothing so transitory as the happiness of red liveries[3]!

It is not to fill up the page that I now advert to the weather, which at last is become fine, and tolerably warm; but I enjoy it, as it will favour your riding, and both, I trust, will give you full health and spirits by the ugly month's end. Your old rapacious landlord, I flatter myself, will be reasonable when it is in vain to be otherwise. I should not like the house by Bushy Park for you, though better than none. The personage that will gain most by your delay will be Tonton, whose long nose begins to recover its curled rotundity. It is the best-tempered quiet animal alive, which is candid in me to own, as he, as long as it is light, prefers my footboy, or a bone on the lawn, to my company. In the evening, as I allow him to lie on every couch and chair, he thinks me agreeable enough. I must celebrate the sense of Fidele, Mrs. Damer's tarrier. Without making the slightest gesture, her mistress only said to her,—'Now, Fidele, you may here jump on any chair you please.' She instantly jumped on the settee; and so she did in every room for the whole two days she stayed. This is another demonstration to me that dogs understand even language, as far as it relates to their own affairs.

Now I have cleared my character, and that harmony is quite re-established, I will not attempt to eke out my letter, only to say that I am sorry there is but one pen in your family. I hinted in my last that I would compound for a pencil. Of all your visits, that cost me a month, I grudge the least that to your grandmother and aunt, as I can judge

[3] Probably an allusion to Walpole's niece, the Duchess of Gloucester, whose later married life was unhappy.

how happy you make them. It is a good symptom, too, for your husband. Duty and gratitude to parents are seldom, I believe, ingredients in bad wives. Adieu!

Yours most cordially and constantly,

H. W.

2699. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 9, 1789.

You are not very corresponding (though better of late), and therefore I will not load the conscience of your fingers much, lest you should not answer me in three months. I am happy that you are content with my edition of your *Ghost*, and with the brown copy. Everybody is charmed with your poem: I have not heard one breath but of applause. In confirmation, I enclose a note to me from the Duchess of Gloucester, who certainly never before wished to be an authoress. You may lay it up in the archives of Cowslip Green, and carry it along with your other testimonials to Parnassus.

Mrs. Carter, to whom I sent a copy, is delighted with it. The Bishop, with whom I dined last week, is extremely for your printing an edition for yourself, and desired I would press you to it. Mind, I do press you; and could Bonner's ghost be laid again—which is impossible, for it will walk for ever, and by day too—we would have it laid in the Red Sea by some West Indian merchant, who must be afraid of spirits, and cannot be in charity with *you*.

Mrs. Boscawen dined at Fulham with me. It rained all day; and, though the last of July, we had *fires* in every room, as if Bonner had been still in possession of the see.

I have not dared to recollect you too often by overt acts, dear Madam; as, by the slowness of your answer, you seem to be sorry my memory was so very alert. Besides, it looks as if you had a mind to keep me at due distance,

by the great civility and cold complimentality of your letter; a style I flattered myself you had too much good will towards me to use. Pretensions to humility I know are generally traps for flattery; but, could you know how very low my opinion is of myself, I am sure you would not have used the terms to me you did, and which I will not repeat, as they are by no means applicable to me. If I ever had tinsel parts, age has not only tarnished them, but convinced me how frippery they were.

> Sweet are your cowslips, sour my Strawberry Hill;
> My fruits are fallen, your blossoms flourish still.

Mrs. Boscawen told me last night that she had received a long letter from you, which makes me flatter myself you have had no return of your nervous complaints. Mrs. Walsingham I have seen four or five times: Miss Boyle has decorated their house most charmingly; she has not only designed, but *carved in marble*, three beautiful bas-reliefs, with boys, for a chimney-piece; besides painting elegant panels for the library, and forming, I do not know how, pilasters of black and gold beneath glass; in short, we are so improved in taste, that, if it would be decent, I could like to live fifty or sixty years more, just to see how matters go on. In the meantime, I wish my Macbethian wizardess would tell me 'that Cowslip Dale should come to Strawberry Hill'; which, by the etiquette of oracles, you know, would certainly happen, because so improbable. I will be content if the nymph of the Dale will visit the Old Man of the Mountain, and her most sincere friend,

H. Walpole.

2700. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 13, 1789.

I have received at once most kind letters from you both; too kind, for you both talk of gratitude. Mercy on me! Which is the obliged, and which is the gainer? Two charming beings, whom everybody likes and approves, and who yet can be pleased with the company and conversation and old stories of a Methusalem? or I, who at the end of my days have fallen into a more agreeable society than ever I knew at any period of my life? I will say nothing of your persons, sense, or accomplishments; but where, united with all those, could I find so much simplicity, void of pretensions and affectation? This from any other man would sound like compliment and flattery; but in me, who have appointed myself your guardian, it is a duty to tell you of your merits, that you may preserve and persevere in them. If I ever descry any faults, I will tell you as freely of them. Be just what you are, and you may dare my reproofs.

I will restrain even reproaches, though in jest, if it puts my sweet Agnes to the trouble of writing when she does not care for it. It is the extreme equality of my affection for both that makes me jealous if I do not receive equal tokens of friendship from both; and though nothing is more just than the observation of two sisters repeating the same ideas, yet never was that remark so ill applied. Though your minds are so congenial, I have long observed how originally each of you expresses her thoughts. I could repeat to you expressions of both, which I remember as distinctly as if I had only known either of you. For the future there shall be perfect liberty amongst us. Either of you shall write when she pleases; while my letters are

Letter 2700.—Not in C.

inseparably meant to both, though the direction may contain but one name, lest the postman should not comprehend a double address.

I can tell you nothing new from France, that is authentic, only that the explosion at Besançon, I am assured, was a fable, grounded on an accident that happened to a man who, going to see a train laid for blowing up a hill, and having a pipe in his mouth, some sparks fell, and, setting fire, blew up him, his wife, and child.

The death of the Abbess of Montmartre was false, too, though written by Mrs. Swinburn[1] to her husband! What, then, can one believe? Nothing. Nay, I can prove that there is a man living who believes his ears against his own eyes. Listen! The minister of our parish told me t'other day that Lord Camelford is *not* the author of a pamphlet of which there has been much talk lately. I said, 'Sir, I doubt you are mistaken.' He replied, 'Sir, I assure you Mr. Cambridge told me an hour ago that he had just seen the D. of Queensberry, who had affirmed to him that the pamphlet is *not* Ld. C's.' I lifted up my eyes to the third heaven! 'Mr. C. told you so?' 'Yes, Sir, Mr. C.' 'Bless my soul, Sir,' said I, 'why, but four days ago Mr. C., in this room, told me Mr. G. Hardinge had shown him the pamphlet, and told him he had received it from Lord C., the author. Mr. C. had read it, and gave me a minute account of the six letters it contained.'

Was ever so strange a story? Lo, what a thirst of news can do! it can efface one's memory in four days, and leave no more impression than if one's memory could not contain a tittle but what it has received last.

I do not vouch for my next story, but, true or coined, the answer was good.

[1] Martha, daughter of John Baker, solicitor to the Leeward Islands; m. (1767) Henry Swinburne, the traveller and connoisseur.

The King of Spain consulted his minister whether he should march 40,000 men into France at the requisition of Louis Seize. 'I can send them if your Majesty commands me,' replied the minister, 'but if I do, your Majesty will soon want them at home.'

The flame does seem spreading, and no doubt will rage in Austrian Flanders, where a more real tyrant than poor Louis has justly provoked them.

I have not seen Mrs. A. very lately, but should, like you, much disapprove jesting on such dreadful calamities. I am shocked at a brutality that disgraces us. In London a caricature print has been published against M. de Luxembourg and some of the unhappy fugitives, and the Queen of France.

I approve of your suspending a new offer to your late landlord till quite necessary; nay, I have heard of a house at Teddington likely to be vacant by your time, and have ordered an indirect inquiry to be made. It is much nearer to Twickenham than t'other side of Bushy Park. Of the Pepys's I have seen very little yet. I called on them t'other day to ask them to dine here; but one of their little boys has broken his arm, and the mother will not leave him, nor the husband her.

I have been at Lady Cecilia's this evening since I wrote the first part of my letter. Mr. Wheler is there, and Mrs. Anderson, who has seen, as she told you, swarms of refugees at the French Embassador's, especially the *Lieutenant de Police*, Monsr. de Crosne, who had the rope about his neck, but made his escape while a new tumult arose. They are savages, who have known so little of liberty that they take murder for it. Good night!

2701. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 14, 1789.

Though I know your Ladyship and Lord Ossory were prepared and expected the misfortune which the papers tell me has happened, I cannot help expressing the part I take in your loss of so very amiable and deserving a person as Lady Lansdowne[1]. I am even more sensible to it, as I dread a similar misfortune in one, I may venture to say, of as excellent qualities and disposition, my niece, Lady Dysart, whose case flattered us a little in the spring; but she has lately grown so much worse again, that I fear her duration will be short.

I say no more, for time only, not words, can soften such afflictions, nor can any consolations be suggested, that do not more immediately occur to the persons afflicted. To moralize can comfort those only who do not want to be comforted.

2702. To John Pinkerton.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 14, 1789.

I must certainly have expressed myself very awkwardly, dear Sir, if you conceive I meant the slightest censure on your book, much less on your manner of treating it; which is as able, and clear, and demonstrative as possible. No; it was myself, my age, my want of apprehension and memory, and my total ignorance of the subject, which I intended to blame. I never did taste or study the very ancient histories of nations. I never had a good memory for names of persons, regions, places, which no specific circumstances concurred to make me remember:—and now, at seventy-two, when, as is common, I forget numbers of

Letter 2701.—[1] *Née* Lady Louisa Fitzpatrick, and sister of Lord Ossory.

names most familiar to me, is it possible I should read with pleasure any work that consists of a vocabulary so totally new to me? Many years ago, when my faculties were much less impaired, I was forced to quit Dow's *History of Indostan*, because the Indian names made so little impression on me, that I went backward instead of forward, and was every minute reverting to the former page to find about whom I was reading. Your book was a still more laborious work to me; for it contains such a series of argumentation that it demanded a double effort from a weak old head; and, when I had made myself master of a deduction, I forgot it the next day, and had my pains to renew.

These defects have for some time been so obvious to me, that I never read now but the most trifling books; having often said that, at the very end of life, it is useless to be improving one's stock of knowledge, great or small, for the next world.

Thus, Sir, all I have said in my last letter or in this, is an encomium on your work, not a censure or criticism. It would be hard on you, indeed, if my incapacity detracted from your merit.

Your arguments in defence of works of science and deep disquisition are most just; and I am sure I have neither power nor disposition to answer them. You have treated your matter as it ought to be treated. Profound men or conversant in the subject, like Mr. Dempster[1], will be pleased with it, for the very reasons that made it difficult to me. If Sir Isaac Newton had written a fairy tale, I should have swallowed it eagerly; but do you imagine, Sir, that, idle as I am, I am idiot enough to think that Sir Isaac had better have amused me for half an hour, than enlightened mankind and all ages? I was so fair as to confess to you that

Letter 2702.—[1] George Dempster (1732–1818), agriculturalist; sometime Director of the East India Company.

your work was above me, and did not divert me: you was too candid to take that ill, and must have been content with silently thinking me very silly; and I am too candid to condemn any man for thinking of me as I deserve. I am only sorry when I do deserve a disadvantageous character.

Nay, Sir, you condescend, after all, to ask my opinion of the best way of treating antiquities; and, by the context, I suppose you mean, how to make them entertaining. I cannot answer you in one word; because there are two ways, as there are two sorts of readers. I should therefore say, to please antiquaries of judgement, as you have treated them, with arguments and proofs; but, if you would adapt antiquities to the taste of those only who read only to be diverted, not to be instructed, the nostrum is very easy and short. You must *divert* them in the true sense of the word *diverto*—you must turn them out of the way—you must treat them with digressions, nothing or very little to the purpose. But easy as I call this recipe, you, I believe, would find it more difficult to execute, than the indefatigable industry you have employed to penetrate chaos and extract the truth. There have been professors who have engaged to adapt all kinds of knowledge to the meanest capacities. I doubt their success, at least on me—however, you need not despair; all readers are not as dull and superannuated as, dear Sir, yours, &c.

2703. To John Pinkerton.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 19, 1789.

I will not use many words, but enough, I hope, to convince you that I meant no irony in my last. All I said of you and myself was very sincere. It is my true opinion that your understanding is one of the strongest, most manly, and clearest I ever knew; and, as I hold my own to be of

a very inferior kind, and know it to be incapable of sound, deep application, I should have been very foolish, if I had attempted to sneer at you or your pursuits. Mine have always been light and trifling, and tended to nothing but my casual amusement; I will not say, without a little vain ambition of showing some parts; but never with industry sufficient to make me apply them to anything solid. My studies, if they could be called so, and my productions, were alike desultory. In my latter age, I discovered the futility both of my objects and writings: I felt how insignificant is the reputation of an author of mediocrity; and that, being no genius, I only added one name more to a list of writers that had told the world nothing but what it could as well be without.

These reflections were the best proofs of my sense; and, when I could see through my own vanity, there is less wonder at my discovering that such talents as I might have had are impaired at seventy-two. Being just to myself I am not such a coxcomb as to be unjust to you. No, nor did I cover any irony towards you in the opinion I gave you of the way of making deep writings palatable to the mass of readers. Examine my words; and I am sure you will find that, if there was anything ironic in my meaning, it was levelled at your readers, not at you. It is my opinion, that whoever wishes to be read by many, if his subject is weighty and solid, must treat the majority with more than is to his purpose. Do not you believe that twenty name Lucretius because of the poetic commencement of his books, for five that wade through his philosophy?

I promised to say but little; and, if I have explained myself clearly, I have said enough. It is not, I hope, my character to be a flatterer: I do most sincerely think you capable of great things; and I should be a pitiful knave if I told you so unless it was my opinion; and what end could

it serve to me? Your course is but beginning; mine is almost terminated. I do not want you to throw a few daisies on my grave; and if you make the figure I augur you will, I shall not be a witness to it. Adieu, dear Sir!

2704. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday night, Aug. 20, 1789.

If the worst comes to the worst, I think I can secure you a house at Teddington, a very comfortable one, very reasonably, and a more agreeable one than the Cecilian destination at Bushy Gate; at least, *more agreeable to my Lord Castlecomer*, for it is nearer to me by half. That Strawberry proverb I must explain to you for your future use. There was an old Lady Castlecomer, who had an only son, and he had a tutor called Roberts, who happened to break his leg. A visitant lamented the accident to her Ladyship. The old rock replied, 'Yes, indeed, it is very inconvenient to my Lord Castlecomer!' This saying was adopted forty years ago into the phraseology of Strawberry, and is very expressive of the selfish apathy towards others, which refers everything to its own centre, and never feels any shock that does not vibrate to its own interest.

The house in question is at the entrance of Teddington. You may shake hands with Mr. Pepys out of the window. A Mrs. Armstrong took it for one year at fourscore pounds, but is tired of making hay, and minded to leave it at Michaelmas; but says that her landlord has behaved so well towards her, that though she will pay the whole, she will give it up to him at quitting it. I sent to him to inquire what he would ask for October and November. He replied I should name my own price, and I am to have the refusal. I think he cannot expect above 20*l.* at most. All

Letter 2704.—Not in C.

I now dread is Mad. Armstrong's loitering into October. Tell me your pleasure on this. Lady Anne Conolly, who visits Mrs. Armstrong, says the house is perfectly neat and convenient. Let the Duke of Northumberland's steward rust with his avarice!

I know nothing, nothing at all. Indeed, I am too much engrossed by a sad misfortune too likely to fall on my family and me! Dear Lady Dysart is in the utmost danger. Her case is pronounced to be water on her breast, and every day may be her last! She suffers considerably, but with her unalterable patience! But I will not afflict your tender hearts with dwelling on so melancholy a subject.

Lady Juliana Penn is still lying on a couch. What she thought a bruise on her leg has by neglect proved a wound. Her sister, Lady Harriet, was here the other morning with her daughters, and I showed them the whole house myself, as they are excellent people, and the daughters have taste. The youngest especially struck me by her knowledge of good pictures, which she immediately showed she understood. This of my house being shown is a dangerous subject for me to tap, such a grievance is it become; I have actually tickets given out till the middle of the week after next. I write two or three every day, or as many excuses. Pray come, and make my evenings at least pleasant.

Summer is arrived at last, though as much after the due time as if it was one of the *ton*. It is more bounteous, however, and will bless the poor by lowering bread. The whole face of the country is spread with luxurious harvests and gilt by shining suns.

The Johnstones are gone to Park Place, where Lady Dysart's situation prevented my meeting them. Mr. and Mrs. Anderson are cooing *tête à tête* at Hampton, as if they were Venus's own turtles left at home in her stable. They told me that on Tuesday night the Duchess of Argyle walked

into old Brutus's assembly at Hampton Court, but did look too like an apparition!

I have exhausted all my nothings, and if I have no letter from you, shall send this away, meagre as it is, because I want to know your will about the Teddingtonian villa.

Friday afternoon.

Monsieur de Teddington has been with me, and is all accommodating—if Mrs. Armstrong will not stay till after the first week in October. I asked his price; he said, 'Should you think ten guineas a month too much?' if I did, he would lower. Therefore, no doubt you may have it for eighteen for the two months, and you may tell me to offer sixteen. Pray let me have an answer soon, for I will convey to Mrs. A. that she will hurt her landlord if she lingers beyond St. Michaelmas.

I think, if my account should suit you, the best way will be, as soon as you arrive in town, for Mr. Berry and you two to come and lodge with me for a day or two, and then you can go and view your future nest at your leisure, and *that* you may insert, with a little cavil at the price, in your answer to me, which will make your assent conditional.

Saturday.

I have no letter, so this departs; but pray answer it directly.

2705. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 23, 1789.

I have not been able to obey your Ladyship in trying to amuse Lord Ossory. I have seen, heard, or know nothing entertaining. From my own windows I see the tall avenues and chimneys of Ham House, where my poor niece lies

languishing and dying. She still is carried to air, and said to me two days ago, 'I am not afraid now of crossing Kingston Bridge (which is very ruinous), I am too far gone myself!' This is not a theme to enliven anybody, and I will drop it.

Joyous I know nothing, but the prosperity of the harvest, which is favourable, indeed, and will ease the poor. Comparison, too, must make us happy, when such desolation has spread over the Continent. If we have the sense to preserve our tranquillity, what a moment for us! In the midst of the horrors one reads from France I could but smile at one paragraph. An Abbé de Sieyès[1] excuses himself to the *États* from accepting the post of Speaker, as he is *busy in forming a Bill of Rights and a new constitution.* One would think he was writing a prologue to a new play! We have one monster who is groaning to create as much anarchy, that he too, I suppose, may form a new constitution! There has been in the papers a pathetic lamentation that Lord George Gordon is still in durance! So are the tigers and hyæna in the Tower, and I hope his Lordship will not find bail before they do!

Richmond is in the first request this summer. Mrs. Bouverie is settled there with a large court. The Sheridans are there too, and the Bunburys. I have been once with the first; with the others I am not acquainted. I go once or twice a week to George Selwyn late in the evening, when he comes in from walking:—about as often to Mrs. Ellis here, and to Lady Cecilia at Hampton; but all together cannot contribute to an entertaining letter, and it is odd to say that though my house is all the morning full of company, nobody lives so much alone. I have already this season had between seventy and fourscore companies to see my house;

LETTER 2705.— [1] The Abbé Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès (1748–1836), at this time deputy for Paris in the *États Généraux.*

and half my time passes in writing tickets or excuses. I wish I could think as an old sexton did at King's College. One of the fellows told him he must get a great deal of money by showing it: 'Oh no, master,' replied he, 'everybody has seen it now.' *My* companies, it seems, are more prolific, and every set begets one or two more.

These are miserable scraps to send you, Madam; but I have no better, and cannot spin out of myself. I had rather be insipid, too, than fancy I can amuse when I have really nothing to say. Lord Ossory knows my zeal, and how glad I should be to divert him if I could.

2706. To Richard Gough.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 24, 1789.

I shall heartily lament with you, Sir, the demolition of those beautiful chapels at Salisbury[1]. I was scandalized long ago at the ruinous state in which they were indecently suffered to remain. It appears as strange, that, when a spirit of restoration and decoration has taken place, it should be mixed with barbarous innovation. As much as taste has improved, I do not believe that modern execution will equal our models. I am sorry that I can only regret, not prevent. I do not know the Bishop of Salisbury[2] even by sight, and certainly have no credit to obstruct any of his plans. Should I get sight of Mr. Wyatt, which it is not easy to do, I will remonstrate against the intended alteration; but, probably, without success, as I do not suppose he has authority enough to interpose effectually: still, I will try.

It is an old complaint with me, Sir, that when families are extinct, chapters take the freedom of removing ancient

Letter 2706. —[1] The Beauchamp and Hungerford chapels were demolished (in accordance with the orders of the chapter) during the alterations and restorations carried out by Wyatt.

[2] The Hon. Shute Barrington.

monuments, and even of selling over again the sites of such tombs. A scandalous, nay, dishonest abuse, and very unbecoming clergymen! Is it creditable for divines to traffic for consecrated ground, and which the church had already sold? I do not wonder that magnificent monuments are out of fashion when they are treated so disrespectfully. You, Sir, alone, have placed several out of the reach of such a kind of simoniacal abuse; for to buy into the church, or to sell the church's land twice over, breathes a similar kind of spirit. Perhaps, as the subscription indicates taste, if some of the subscribers could be persuaded to object to the removal of the two beautiful chapels, as contrary to their view of beautifying, it might have good effect; or, if some letter were published in the papers against the destruction, as barbarous and the result of bad taste, it might divert the design. I zealously wish it were stopped, but I know none of the chapter or subscribers.

2707. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday evening, Aug. 27, 1789.

I JUMPED for joy—that is, my heart did, which is all the remain of me that is *in statu jumpante*—at the receipt of your letter this morning, which tells me you approve of the house at Teddington. How kind you was to answer so incontinently! I believe you borrowed the best steed from the races. I have sent to the landlord to come to me to-morrow: but I could not resist beginning my letter to-night, as I am at home alone, with a little pain in my left wrist; but the right one has no brotherly feeling for it, and would not be put off so.

You ask how you have deserved such attentions? Why, by deserving them; by every kind of merit, and by that superlative one to me, your submitting to throw away so

much time on a forlorn antique—you two, who, without specifying particulars (and you must, at least, be conscious that you are not two frights), might expect any fortune and distinctions, and do delight all companies. On which side lies the wonder? Ask me no more such questions, or I will cram you with reasons.

My poor dear niece grows worse and worse: the medical people do not pretend to give us any hopes; they only say she may last some weeks, which I do not expect, nor do absent myself. I had promised Mr. Barrett to make a visit to my Gothic child, his house, on Sunday; but I have written to-day to excuse myself: so I have to the Duchess of Richmond, who wanted me to meet her mother, sister, and General Conway at Goodwood next week.

I wish Lady Fitzwilliam may not hear the same bad news as I expect in the midst of her royal visitors: her sister, the Duchess of St. Albans, is dying, in the same way as Lady Dysart; and for some days has not been in her senses. How charming you are to leave those festivities for your good parents; who I do not wonder are impatient for you. I, who am old enough to be your great-grandmother, know one needs not be your near relation to long for your return. Of all your tour, next to your duteous visits, I most approve the jaunt to the sea: I believe in its salutary air more than in the whole college and all its works.

Mrs. Armstrong's secession is doubly fortunate. Your last year's mansion is actually taken by Lord Cathcart[1], and what is incredible, his wife is to lie in there—it must be in the round summer-house; and though its person may have tempted her as an *étui* at present, I should think, as it is three parts of glass, it could not have allured any

LETTER 2707.—[1] William Schaw Cathcart (1755–1843), tenth Baron (and afterwards first Viscount and Earl) Cathcart; m. (1779) Elizabeth, daughter of Andrew Elliot, of Greenwells, Roxburgh, sometime Lieutenant-Governor of New York

pregnant woman, unless she expected to be delivered of a melon.

You must not expect any news from me, French or homebred. I am not in the way of hearing any: your morning gazetteer rarely calls on me, as I am not likely to pay him in kind. About royal progresses, paternal or filial, I never inquire; nor do you, I believe, care more than I do. The small wares in which the societies at Richmond and Hampton Court deal are still less to our taste. My poor niece and her sisters take up most of my time and thoughts: but I will not attrist you to indulge myself, but will break off here, and finish my letter when I have seen your new landlord. Good night!

Friday.

Well, I have seen him, and nobody was ever so accommodating! He is as courteous as a candidate for a county. You may stay in his house till Christmas if you please, and shall pay but twenty pounds; and if more furniture is wanting, it shall be supplied.

Mrs. Armstrong talks of not quitting but the first week in October; but as she is prodigiously timorous about her health, he thinks the first round shower will send her to London. In any case you know you may come and stay in your conjugal castle till the house of your separate maintenance is vacant for you. I was curious to learn whence Mr. Wickes contracted all this *honnêteté*. I do not believe I have discovered, for all I can trace of his history is that he married a dowager mistress of General Harvey, whom the General called Monimia, though not the meekest of her calling, and with whom (Wickes) she did not at all agree. I am sure she was the aggressor, as he has captivated Mrs. Armstrong and me by his flowing benignity. Besides, I have no notion how one can use one's wife ill, even if one has two.

Berkeley Square, Aug. 29.

You will laugh at me, for I am just come to town, though it is the first real summer day we have had; but I had a little business, and return to-morrow. As this very fine weather is arrived so late, I suppose it is some fugitive heat that has escaped from the troubles on the Continent, which are spreading along the Rhine. I hope it has left its sting behind it, and will not infect us who have every reason to be happy.—Adieu.

2708. To Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 4, 1789.

I am charmed that Mr. Berry ratifies my negotiation for the house at Teddington; and I do not doubt *now* but Mrs. Armstrong will quit it even before Michaelmas: for, though Saturday last was so glorious, it was the setting, not rising, sun of summer. It rained a torrent all Sunday evening; so it has done almost every day since, and did last night, and does at this instant. I grieve for the incomplete harvest; but as it is an ill rain that brings nobody good, I must rejoice if it washes away Dame Armstrong. Mr. Wickes I am sure will give me the earliest notice of her departure—for as Spenser says,

> A semely man our hostè is withal
> To ben a marshal in a lordis hall[1].

You ask whether I will call you wise or stupid for leaving York races in the middle—neither; had you chosen to stay, you would have done rightly. The more young persons see, where there is nothing blameable, the better; as increasing the stock of ideas early will be a resource for age. To resign

Letter 2708.—[1] The lines are by Chaucer, not Spenser:—
'A semely man our hoste was with-alle
For to han been a marshal in an halle.'

pleasure to please tender relations is amiable, and superior to wisdom; for wisdom, however laudable, is but a selfish virtue. But I do decide peremptorily that it was very prudent to decline the invitation to Wentworth House, which was obligingly given; but, as I am very proud for you, I should have disliked your being included in a mobbish kind of *cohue*. You two are not to go where any other two misses would have been equally *priées*, and where people would have been thinking of the Princes more than of the Berrys. Besides, princes are so rife now, that, besides my sweet nephew [2] in the Park, we have another at Richmond: the Duke of Clarence has taken Mr. Henry Hobart's house, point-blank over against Mr. Cambridge's, which will make the good woman of that mansion cross herself piteously, and stretch the throats of the blatant beast at Sudbrook [3], and of all the other pious matrons *à la ronde*; for his Royal Highness, to divert lonesomeness, has brought with him a Miss Polly Finch, who, being still more averse to solitude, declares that any tempter would make even Paradise more agreeable than a constant *tête-à-tête*.

I agree with you in not thinking Beatrice one of Miss Farren's capital parts. Mrs. Pritchard played it with more spirit, and was superior to Garrick's Benedict; so is Kemble [4], too, as he is to Quin in Maskwell. Kemble and Lysons [5] the clergyman passed all Wednesday here with me. The former is melting the three parts of *Henry the Sixth* into one piece: I doubt it will be difficult to make a tolerable play out of them.

[2] The Duke of Gloucester.

[3] Lady Greenwich.

[4] John Philip Kemble (1757–1823). He first appeared in London in 1783, and undertook the management of Drury Lane Theatre in 1788.

[5] The Rev. Daniel Lysons (1762–1834), topographer. Lysons and Walpole became very friendly, and Lysons dedicated to the latter (then Earl of Orford) his *Environs of London*. Four letters of Walpole to Lysons are printed for the first time in the present edition of the *Letters* from originals in possession of Mrs. Alfred Morrison.

I have talked scandal from Richmond, like its gossips; and now, by your queries after Lady L.[6], you are drawing me into more, which I do not love: but she is dead and forgotten, but on the shelves of an old library, or on those of my old memory; which you will be routing into. The lady you wot of, then, was the first wife of Lord Catherlogh, before he was an earl; and who was son of Knight, the South Sea cashier, and whose second wife lives here at Twickenham. Lady Loughborough, a high-coloured, lusty black woman, was parted from her husband upon a gallantry she had with Dalton, the reviver of *Comus*, and a divine. She retired into the country; corresponded, as you see by her Letters, with the small poets of that time; but, having no Theseus amongst them, consoled herself, as it is said, like Ariadne, with Bacchus. This might be a fable, like that of her Cretan Highness—no matter; the fry of little anecdotes are so numerous now, that throwing one more into the shoal is of no consequence, if it entertains you for a moment; nor need you believe what I don't warrant.

Gramercy for your intention of seeing Wentworth Castle: it is my favourite of all great seats—such a variety of ground, of wood, and water; and almost all executed and disposed with so much taste by the present Earl. Mr. Gilpin sillily could see nothing but faults there. The new front is, in my opinion, one of the lightest and most beautiful buildings on earth: and pray like the little Gothic edifice, and its position in the menagerie! Your husband recommended it, and had it drawn by Mr. Bentley, from Chichester Cross. Don't bring me a pair of scissors from Sheffield: I am determined nothing shall cut our loves, though I should live out the rest of Methusalem's term, as you kindly wish, and as I can believe, though you are my

[6] Lady Luxborough, erroneously mentioned a little further on as 'Lady Loughborough.'

wives; for I am persuaded my Agnes wishes so too. Don't you?

At night.

I am just come from Cambridge's, where I have not been in an evening, time out of mind. Major Dixon, *alias* 'the charming man,' is there; but I heard nothing of the Emperor's rickets[7]; a great deal, and many horrid stories, of the violences in France; for his brother, the Chevalier Jerningham, is just arrived from Paris. You have heard of the destruction of thirty-two châteaus in Burgundy, at the instigation of a demon, who has since been broken on the rack. There is now assembled near Paris a body of sixteen thousand deserters, daily increasing; who, they fear, will encamp and dictate to the capital, in spite of their militia of twenty thousand *bourgeois*. It will soon, I suppose, ripen to several armies, and a civil war; a fine *acheminement* to liberty!

My poor niece[8] is still alive, though weaker every day, and pronounced irrecoverable: yet it is possible she may live some weeks; which, however, is neither to be expected nor wished, for she eats little and sleeps less. Still she is calm, and behaves with the patience of a martyr.

You may perceive, by the former part of my letter, that I have been dipping into Spenser again, though he is no passion of mine: there I lighted upon two lines that, at first sight, reminded me of Mademoiselle d'Éon,

> Now, when Marfisa had put off her beaver,
> To be a woman every one perceive her;

but I do not think that is so perceptible in the *Chevalière*. She looked more feminine, as I remember her, in regimentals, than she does now. She is at best a hen-dragoon,

[7] Miss Berry explains that 'this alludes to something said in a character which Mr. Jerningham had assumed, for the amusement of a society some time before at General Conway's.'

[8] The Countess of Dysart.

or an herculean hostess. I wonder she does not make a campaign in her own country, and offer her sword to the almost dethroned monarch, as a second Joan of Arc. Adieu! for three weeks I shall say *Sancte Michael, ora pro nobis!* You seem to have relinquished your plan of sea-coasting. I shall be sorry for that; it would do you good.

2709. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 5, 1789.

You speak so unperemptorily of your motions, that I must direct to you at random: the most probable place where to hit you, I think, will be Goodwood; and I do address this thither, because I am impatient to thank you for your tale, which is very pretty and easy and genteel. It has made me make a reflection, and that reflection made six lines; which I send you, not as good, but as expressing my thoughts on your writing so well in various ways which you never practised when you was much younger. Here they are:

> The Muse, most wont to fire a youthful heart,
> To gild *your* setting sun reserved her art;
> To crown a life in virtuous labours pass'd,
> Bestow'd her numbers, and her wit at last;
> And, when your strength and eloquence retire,
> Your voice in notes harmonious shall expire.

The *swan* was too common a thought to be directly specified, and, perhaps, even to be alluded to: no matter, such a trifle is below criticism.

I am still here, in no uncertainty, God knows, about poor Lady Dysart, of whom there are not the smallest hopes. She grows weaker every day, and does actually still go out for the air, and may languish many days, though most probably will go off in a moment, as the water rises. She

retains her senses perfectly, and as perfectly her unalterable calmness and patience, though fully sensible of her situation. At your return from Goodwood, I shall like to come to you, if you are unengaged and ready to receive me. For the beauties of Park Place, I am too well acquainted with them, not, like all old persons about their cotemporaries, to think it preserves them long after they are faded; and I am so *unwalking*, that prospects are more agreeable to me when framed and glazed, and I look at them through a window. It is yourselves I want to visit, not your verdure. Indeed, except a parenthesis of scarce all August, there has been no temptation to walk abroad; and the tempter himself would not have persuaded me, if I could, to have climbed that long-lost mountain whence he could show one even the Antipodes. It rained incessantly all June and all July; and now again we have torrents every day.

Jerningham's brother, the Chevalier, is arrived from Paris, and does not diminish the horrors one hears every day. They are now in the capital, dreading the sixteen thousand deserters who hover about them. I conclude that when in the character of banditti the whole disbanded army have plundered and destroyed what they can, they will congregate into separate armies under different leaders, who will hang out different principles, and the kingdom will be a theatre of civil wars; and, instead of liberty, the nation will get petty tyrants, perhaps petty kingdoms: and when millions have suffered, or been sacrificed, the government will be no better than it was, all owing to the intemperance of the *États*, who might have obtained a good constitution, or at least one much meliorated, if they had set out with discretion and moderation. They have left too a sad lesson to despotic princes, who will quote this precedent of frantic *États* against assembling any more, and against all the examples of senates and Parliaments that have preserved

rational freedom. Let me know when it will be convenient to you to receive me. Adieu!

2710. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 1789.

I know whence you wrote last, but not where you are now; you gave me no hint. I believe you fly lest I should pursue, and as if you were angry that I have forced you to sprout into laurels. Yet you say you are vain of it, and that you are no philosopher. Now, if you are vain, I am sure you *are* a philosopher; for it is a maxim of mine, and one of my own making, that there never was a philosopher that did not love *sweetmeats*. You tell me too that you like I should scold you; but since you have appeared as Bonner's *ghost*, I think I shall feel too much awe; for though (which I never expected would be in my power) I have made you stand *in a white sheet*, I doubt my respect is increased. I never did rate you for being too bad, but too good: and if, when you make up your week's account, you find but a fraction of vanity in the sum total, you will fall to repenting, and come forth on Monday as humble as ——. Then, if I huff my heart out, you will only simper, and still wrap yourself up in your obstinate goodness. Well! take your own way; I give you up to all your abominable virtues, and will go answer the rest of your letter.

You ask me if I have enrolled in my *Catalogue* the new ducal apostle[1] from Newmarket—no, truly; I deal not in living authors, nor have I seen his catechism—what a compound, a Prime Minister, a jockey, a missionary! So he is *hedging off* upon religion! His royal ancestor[2] left

Letter 2710.—Incomplete in C.; collated with original in possession of Miss Drage.

[1] The Duke of Grafton, who had become a Unitarian.

[2] Charles II.

two papers about his faith in his strong box—if one could catechize either, do you think their responses would be very apposite?

I congratulate you on the demolition of the Bastile; I mean as you do, of its functions. For the poor soul itself, I had no ill will to it: on the contrary, it was a curious sample of ancient castellar dungeons, which the good folks the founders took for palaces: yet I always hated to drive by it, knowing the miseries it contained. Of itself it did not gobble up prisoners to glut its maw, but received them by command. The destruction of it was silly, and agreeable to the ideas of a mob, who do not know stones and bars and bolts from a *lettre de cachet.* If the country remains free, the Bastile would be as tame as a ducking-stool, now that there is no such thing as a scold. If despotism recovers, the Bastile will rise from its ashes—recover, I fear, it will. The *États* cannot remain a mob of kings, and will prefer a single one to a larger mob of kings and greater tyrants. The nobility, the clergy, and people of property will wait, till by address and money they can divide the people; or, whoever gets the larger or more victorious army into his hands, will be a Cromwell or a Monk. In short, a revolution procured by a national vertigo does not promise a crop of legislators. It is time that composes a good constitution: it formed ours. We were near losing it by the lax and unconditional Restoration of Charles the Second. The Revolution was temperate, and has lasted; and, though it might have been improved, we know that with all its moderation it disgusted half the nation, who would have brought back the old sores.

I abominate the Inquisition as much as you do; yet if the King of Spain receives no check like his cousin Louis, I fear he will not be disposed to relax any terrors. Every crowned head in Europe must ache at present; and the

frantic and barbarous proceedings in France will not meliorate the stock of liberty, though for some time their Majesties will be mighty tender of the rights of their subjects.

According to this hypothesis I can administer some comfort to you about your poor negroes. I do not imagine that they will be emancipated at once; but their fate will be much alleviated, as the attempt will have alarmed their butchers enough to make them gentler, like the European monarchs, for fear of provoking the disinterested, *who have no sugar plantations*, to abolish the horrid traffic.

I do not understand the manœuvre of sugar, and, perhaps, am going to talk nonsense, as my idea may be impracticable; but I wish human wit, which is really very considerable in mechanics and merchantry, could devise some method of cultivating canes and making sugar without the manual labour of the human species. How many mills and inventions have there not been discovered to supply succedaneums to the work of the hands, and which before the discoveries would have been treated as visions! It is true, manual labour has sometimes taken it very ill to be excused, and has destroyed such mills; but the poor negroes would not rise and insist upon being worked to death. Pray talk to some ardent genius, but do not name me; not merely because I may have talked like an idiot, but because my ignorance might, *ipso facto*, stamp the idea with ridicule. People, I know, do not love to be put out of their old ways: no farmer listens at first to new inventions in agriculture; and I don't doubt but bread was originally deemed a new-fangled vagary by those who had seen their fathers live very comfortably upon acorns. Nor is there any harm in starting new game to invention: many excellent discoveries have been made by men who were *à la chasse* of something very different. I am not quite sure

that the arts of making gold, and of living for ever, have been yet found out: yet to how many noble discoveries has the pursuit of those nostrums given birth! Poor chemistry, had she not had such glorious objects in view!

If you are sitting under a cowslip at your cottage, these reveries may amuse you for half an hour, at least make you smile; and for the ease of your conscience, which is always in a panic, they require no answer.

My Straw-Berries will not be here this fortnight; I have found a house for them within a mile of me, which is near enough; we set out with separate beds.

I will not ask you about the new *History of Bristol*, because you are too good a citizen to say a word against your native place; but do pray cast your eye on the prints of the cathedral and castle, the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Chatterton's ignorance, and of Mr. Barrett's too, and on two letters pretended to have been sent to me, and which never were sent. If my incredulity had wavered, they would have fixed it. I wish the milkwoman would assert that Boadicea's dairymaid had invented Dutch tiles; it would be like Chatterton's origins of heraldry and painted glass, in those two letters.

I must, however, mention one word about myself. In the fourth volume of the *Biographia Britann.* I am more candidly treated about that poor lad than usual; yet the writer still affirms that, according to my own account, my reply was too much in the commonplace style of court replies. Now my own words, and the truth, as they stand in print in the very letter of mine which this author quotes, were, 'I wrote him a letter with as much kindness and tenderness as if I had been his guardian.' Is this by my own account a court reply? Nor did I conceive, for I never was a courtier, that courtiers are wont to make *tender* replies to the poor; I am glad to hear they do.

I have kept this letter some days in my writing-box, till I could meet with a stray member of Parliament, for it is not worth making you pay for: but when *you* talk to me I cannot help answering incontinently: besides, can one take up a letter at a long distance, and heat one's reply over again with the same interest that it occasioned at first? Adieu! I wish you may come to Hampton before I leave these purlieus!

Yours *More* and *More*,
H. W.

17th.

P.S. Mr. Pepys has just been here and tells me you are still at Sandleford[3], and that I may enclose my letter to Mrs. Montagu. Pray salute from me all the *casa*.

2711. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 13, 1789.

Lady Dysart, indeed, Madam, was an excellent person[1], and I have reason to lament her, and thank your Ladyship much for your condolence. I had long known her doom was certain. She was convinced of it herself, was impatient for it, though calm and resigned to the last. Her Lord is much more afflicted than I thought him capable of being; but the person who felt it most deeply is the Duchess of Gloucester. They had been dear friends from their infancy. Both she and Mrs. Keppel sat by the corpse the next morning for two hours, for which I was very sorry; but I will not tire your Ladyship with family stories, though I have nothing else to tell you, having scarce seen anybody lately but my relations.

[3] Mrs. Montagu's country seat near Newbury.

Letter 2711.—[1] She died on Sept. 5, 1789.

I am very glad you are out of pain about Lady Ravensworth [2]. I hope she will be preserved as long as Lady Albemarle, who, at eighty-six, has recovered of a thrush, and has her senses and spirits as well as ever. I seem to have some grains of immortality too, for the night before last, going into a stone hall at Hampton Court, a very low step, that I did not perceive in the dusk, tripped me up, and gave me a worse fall than I had when your Ladyship did me the honour of dining here this summer. I fell headlong at once on the stones, and against the leg of a table, bruised one of my fingers, both knees and an elbow, and battered my hip so much that it has a patch as large as the crown of a hat, and as black; but there again my featherhood saved me, and I did not break one of my strawbones.

You see, Madam, to what your old gazetteer is dwindled, when he has nothing but his own mishaps to relate! You might as well correspond with the apothecary of an almshouse; however, I was not overturned with a young prince coming from races, like that stripling Lord Clermont [3]. The *World*, notwithstanding my unbudging quietness, has sent me, I am told, on a party of pleasure to Coomb Bank [4], and furnished me with fifty qualifications and graces that never accompanied me in my best days. I had flattered myself, that to do nothing was the best nostrum for having nothing said of one; but I see anybody may be taxed to contribute a paragraph. Mercy on us! what idle folk there must be, when it is necessary to feed them with such daily bread! Surely no other age ever lived on such insipid fare! Stout horses as they were, how the Houyhnhnms would have stared if they had been told, that in a certain country there were *Daily Courants* to inform the public of

[2] Mother of Lady Ossory.
[3] He was sixty-seven.
[4] The seat of Lord Frederick Campbell in Kent.

what every old Strulbrug was *not* doing. Pope's *Memoirs of P.P., or the Importance of a Man* to himself, is moderate in comparison of the importance of nobody to everybody.

Is not this the season for Farming Woods, Madam? I wish Lord Ossory great sport! The despotic mob at Paris, as the rule of contraries is the first law of a revolution, have made such a massacre of game *à la ronde*, that pheasants are sold at a penny apiece [5]. I doubt, from the present turbulence of France, you will have no *Mémoires de St. Simon*, nor *Lettres de la Duchesse d'Orléans*, to carry in the chaise with you.

Apropos, here is a paragraph verbatim that I found t'other day in the first volume, p. 260, in an old publication of the Abbé Raynal, called *Anecdotes Historiques, Militaires, et Politiques de l'Europe depuis l'Élévation de Charles Quint, &c., jusqu'au Traité d'Aix-la-Chapelle en 1748*, published in 1753:

'Le Dauphin paroissoit né pour gouverner agréablement une monarchie paisible. Le Duc d'Orléans avait tout ce qu'il falloit pour la troubler, y allumer des guerres civiles, et y causer peut-être des Révolutions.'

This after-birth of a miscarriage, for that Duke of Orléans, the younger son of Francis I, died without doing anything, has revived in the person of a prophecy.—Adieu, Madam.

[5] Arthur Young, travelling in Provence in 1789, writes under date of Aug. 30:—'I forgot to observe that, for a few days past, I have been pestered with all the mob of the country shooting: one would think that every rusty gun in Provence is at work, killing all sorts of birds; the shot has fallen five or six times in my chaise and about my ears. The National Assembly has declared that every man has a right to kill game on his own land; and advancing this maxim so absurd as a declaration, though so wise as a law, without any statute of provision to secure the right of game to the possessor of the soil, according to the tenor of the vote, has, as I am everywhere informed, filled all the fields of France with sportsmen to an utter nuisance.' (*Travels in France*, Bohn ed., p. 256.)

2712. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 18, 1789.

I don't wonder that your grandmother is unwilling to part with you, when you sacrifice the amendment of your health to her, and give up bathing for her satisfaction; but, between ourselves, I do not admire her for accepting the sacrifice. You bid me be very kind to make up for your parting with her and your friends. I am like poor Cordelia:—

> I am sure my love's
> More pond'rous than my tongue.

She reserved half her affection from her father for her husband. I will keep none of mine from my wives for my grandmother; but I promise nothing. Come and try.

I will see Mr. Wickes and know more particularly about Mrs. Armstrong's motions. I shall be a little fearful of haggling with him, lest I should sour his complaisance, which hitherto has been all sugar. Still I will not be grandmaternal, and prefer myself to your interest.

I have had a most melancholy scene with the loss of dear Lady Dysart, and the affliction of the family, though her release was to be wished, and for which she wished earnestly herself. We have the comfort of finding that she is full as much regretted as she was known; indeed, a more faultless being exists not within my knowledge. I will transcribe some lines that I have written on her, which have not the merit of poetry, but a much more uncommon one—that of being an epitaph in which there is no exaggeration; however, I beg you will not give a copy of it:—

> Adieu! sweet shade! complete was thy career,
> Though lost too soon, and premature thy bier;

Letter 2712.—Not in C.

For each fair character adorned thy life
Of daughter, sister, friend, relation, wife.
Yet, lest unaltered fortune should have seem'd
The source whence virtues so benignly beam'd,
Long-mining illness prov'd thy equal soul,
And patience, like a martyr's, crown'd the whole.
Pain could not sour, whom blessings had not spoil'd;
Nor death affright, whom not a vice had soil'd.

You shall hear no more on this sad subject, though I have nothing else that will much amuse you: for, besides confinement with my relations, I have been a prisoner in my own house for some days, in consequence of a violent fall I had last week, in which it is wonderful that I lost nor life, nor limb, nor even a bone. I went to sit with my cousins, the three Philips's, on Hampton Court Green; it was dusk; there was a very low step at the door, I did not see it; it tripped me up. I fell headlong on the stones, and against the frame of a table at the door, and battered myself so much, that my whole hip is as black as my shoe for above half a yard[1] long and a quarter wide, besides bruising one hand, both knees, and my left elbow, into which it brought the gout next day. Now, pray admire my lightness: if I had weighed a straw, what mischief might not have happened to me? nay, I have had very little pain; and the gout, not to be out of the fashion, is gone too: and I should have been abroad this morning, if I had not preferred writing to you.

Mrs. Cambridge's prayers have been heard: the Duke of Clarence has already taken another villa at Roehampton; and besides being so soon tired, I suppose he will new furnish that in a week more. Apropos a little, Mr. Cambridge has given me the following very striking quotation from Mich. Drayton's heroic epistles: but it was Lady

[1] 'Year' in MS.

Rothes [2] who found it out—it does *not* apply to Miss Polly —you must look a little higher in the family [3] :—

> Twice as a bride to church I have been led;
> Twice have two lords enjoyed my bridal bed.
> How can that beauty yet be undestroyed,
> That years have wasted and two men enjoyed?
> Or should be thought fit for a Prince's store,
> Of which two subjects were possessed before?

I shall go to Park Place on Monday for two or three days, and then come back to be ready to receive you; but you have not been very gracious, nor said a word of accepting my invitation till the house at Teddington is ready for you. Pray let me know when I may expect you, that I may not enter into any engagement, even for an evening.

As the hour of my seeing you again approaches, and as I have nothing of the least import to tell, I shall not try to lengthen this to its usual complement, though the verses have saved some of my paper. Essays, that act the part of letters, are mighty insipid things, and when one has nothing occasional to say, it is better to say nothing.

The weather has been so cold since Monday, that for these two days I have had the carpenter stopping chinks in window frames, and listing the door of the blue room, which I destine to wife Agnes. Winds will get into these old castles. Sultana Maria is to sleep in the red room, where the Sultan himself resides when he has the gout, and which his haughtiness always keeps very comfortable. Adieu!

[2] Jane Elizabeth Leslie (1750–1810), *suo jure* Countess of Rothes; m. 1. (1766) George Raymond Evelyn; 2. (1772) Lucas Pepys (created a Baronet in 1784).

[3] Alluding to the Prince of Wales and Mrs. Fitzherbert.

2713. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 26, 1789.

My excuse for not answering your Ladyship's two letters directly is that I have been at Park Place, and they waited for me here. This little expedition proves that I have quite recovered of my tumble, of which only a large black mark remains down my side. You are very kind to caution me, but in truth my two late falls have made me so timorous, that I tread with as much awe as if I were to step over nine hot ploughshares.

I am much obliged too for your French anecdotes, Madam, which I had not heard. All their proceedings appear to me shocking or absurd to a degree. I do not guess on what grounds Mr. Wyndham foretells their *success*. I had been told that he thought their debates ridiculous, but a prophet has more strings to his bow than one who only forms his opinion by a small share of common sense. Not that I pretend to any sagacity, which must often be at a fault, for it calculates only by probabilities and experience, and cannot take into its account folly and chance, the two principal arbiters of human affairs; but what does Mr. Wyndham mean by *success*? Is the whole kingdom of France to remain always in such blessed liberty, that every individual is to murder, plunder, and trample on every law? Or out of this lawless and savage scene is order, justice, and temper to arise? Nay, when some constitution is *voted*, will it take place? and if it does, how long will be its duration? Will a new assembly of *États*, elected every two years, corroborate the ordinances of their predecessors? Will they not think themselves as wise, and prove as foolish? What an absurdity is it not to strip the King of all his power, and yet maintain that it is necessary by the

laws that he should assent to every act of violence they pass against him? And compelled, will he think himself bound by that forced assent? Is it not, if possible, still more outrageous, and before they have settled anything at home, to be debating whether they shall allow the King of Spain any future claim to the crown?

In short, they have launched into an ocean of questions that would take a century to discuss, and suppose that a mob of prating legislators, under the rod of the mob of Paris, and questionable by every tumultuous congregation in the provinces, are an all-powerful senate, and may give laws to other kingdoms as well as to their own; though I do not find that *ces messieurs* can command twenty thousand men, and must already have provoked, as they have injured, a very considerable part of their own countrymen.

In the midst of this anarchy is it not supremely ridiculous to hear of a young gentlewoman presenting her watch to the National Fund; and a life-guardsman five-and-twenty livres? Nay, there are some tradesmen's wives appointed commissioners for receiving such patriotic oblations!—In a word, Madam, it is a vertigo of pedantry, and I am surprised they have not yet begun to make songs and epigrams on themselves! But so much do I differ from Mr. Wyndham, that I think they have lost a glorious moment for obtaining a considerable amendment of their constitution, and perhaps a lasting one, by their intemperance; and that they have either entailed endless civil wars on, perhaps, a division of their country, or will sink under worse despotism than what they have shaken off. To turn a whole nation loose from all restraint, and tell them that every man has a right to be his own king, is not a very sage way for preparing them to receive a new code, which must curtail that boundless prerogative of free will, and

probably was not the first lesson given on the original institution of government. The present host of lawgivers must, I doubt, cut the throats of half their pupils, before they persuade the other half to go to school again to any regular system.

I would not be uncharitable, but methinks Monsieur Necker's magnificence towards Madame de Polignac looks a little as if he did not think the Queen's influence entirely cut up by the roots. Her mockery, however, is not very captivating.

Madame de Boufflers and the Comtesse Emilie, her daughter-in-law, I hear, are come to London; and Woronzow, the Russian minister, who has a house at Richmond, is to lend it to her for the winter, as her fortune has received some considerable blow in the present commotions. I pity her much more than the Dame de Polignac, as she could have no hand in causing the grievances, or in the tempestuous correction of them.

I have had no royal visit from Richmond, Madam. The Duke of Clarence (no wonder—at his age) is already weary of a house in the middle of a village with nothing but a green short apron to the river, a situation only fit for an old gentlewoman who has put out her knee-pans and loves cards. The Prince has taken a somewhat better place at Roehampton, and enters upon it at Christmas.

My Straw-Berries are not yet returned, but I expect them next week, and have found a house for them at Teddington very near me.

I am sorry to tell your Ladyship, if you do not know it, that Lord Waldegrave is ill of the jaundice at Lord Aylesford's, in Warwickshire [1]. He is rather better than he was, but I believe it is a disorder never cured

Letter 2713.—[1] Packington Hall, near Coventry; Lord Waldegrave died there on Oct. 17, 1789.

expeditiously; I am sure not so soon as I wish, who interest myself exceedingly about him.

You go later to your forest, Madam, I think, than you used to do. Did your Parisian intelligencer inform you that in the present reign of everybody there has been such a massacre of all game, that pheasants are sold for a penny apiece? I never admired Game Acts, but I do not wish to see guns in the hands of all the world, for there are other *ferae naturae* besides hares and partridges; and when all Europe is admiring and citing our constitution, I am for preserving it where it is. The decay of prerogative on the Continent is a good counter-security to us; I do not think the season will invite anybody to encroach on liberty; and I hope liberty will be content to sit under her own vine and fig-tree, and receive the advantages that France is flinging into her lap.

Quod optanti divum promittere nemo
Auderet, volvenda Dies en attulit ultro!

If you pretend not to understand this passage, Madam, Lord Ossory will construe it, or if he is abroad shooting, Virgil only means that no speculating banker in England would have dared to bet that our stocks would ever rise to eighty by an influx of French money.

P.S. I own I shall be curious to see the new constitution of France when it shall be formed, if formed it can be. It must be a curious patchwork composed from sudden and unconnected motions, started in a hurly-burly of disputes, without any plan or system, and voted as fluctuating interests and passions preponderate sometimes one way, sometimes another, with no harmony in the compost, but calculated to contradict every view of the old government—or secretly to preserve enough of it to counteract the new. Nay, such a total subversion annihilates all the lawyers as

well as all the laws of the kingdom. The professors may now literally burn their books, for which of them can they quote? This idea might be extended *in infinitum.*

2714. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday night, Sept. 30, 1789.

When an ancient gentleman marries, it is his best excuse that he wants a nurse, which I suppose was the motive of Solomon, who was the wisest of mortals, and a most puissant and opulent monarch, for marrying a thousand wives in his old age when, I conclude, he was very gouty. I, in humble imitation of that sapient king, and no mines of Ophir flowing into my exchequer, espoused a couple of helpmates, but being less provident than the son of David, suffered both to ramble into the land of Goshen when I most want their attendance.—I tell a great story: I do not want you: on the contrary, I am delighted that you did not accept my invitation. I should have been mortified to the death to have had you in my house when I am lying helpless on my couch, or going to bed early from pain. In short, I came from Park Place last Thursday, with an inflammation in my foot from a chalk-stone, which I was obliged to have lanced the next morning, and it is not well yet. Nay, it has brought the gout into the knee of the same side, and I suffered a good deal yesterday evening, and blessed myself you were not here. Did you think it would ever come to that? I am truly a great deal better to-day; but I fear it will scarce be possible for me to be in town by Saturday, though I had ordered my house to be aired and ready for me then. In the meantime here is the state of your affairs:—Mr. Wickes goes into Norfolk to-morrow for three weeks to shoot.

Letter 2714.—Not in C.

I told him you was much displeased at his asking new terms, and that till you should come to town I could say nothing positive to him, and he must not depend on anything till then. He was all penitence and complaisance. I told him I must have a lease signed; he said there was no necessity for it. 'Oh, yes,' I said, 'but there is.' He answered, if I would send one down to him, signed by Mr. Berry, he would sign it too; but what I shall do when I know your determination is to send to Mr. Wickes a copy of the few lines which Mr. Pepys, whom I have consulted twice, had from Lady Dudley, and which shall specify that you are to pay but 20*l.*, in full of all demands, from the time you shall take possession of the house to December 25th, and when Wickes returns that agreement signed, Mr. Berry will sign it too. Thus, you see, I have acted with the utmost caution, nor have been to the house, nor sent anybody to see it, that Wickes might not say we had taken possession.

Now, hold a council incontinently, and let me know its decree; or why should not Mr. Berry come to me immediately, if I cannot come, as I fear? You know here is a dinner and a bed always at his service, which will save a great deal of time.

I am not quite for having your house in town new painted at this time of year when it cannot dry fast. There is nothing so very unwholesome as the smell of new paint. Cannot you make shift as it is for another year? I never perceived its wanting it; and you do not propose to give assemblies and concerts.

I shall write again by Friday's post, and let you know how I shall find myself—so if I do not come, you will have time to answer by Saturday's post, that is, if you arrive on Friday, or in time on Saturday. If I hear nothing on Sunday morning, I shall conclude you arrived

too late. Thus I think I have foreseen and said all that can be necessary, and perhaps more like a nurse than a person that wants one.

Be sure that I find you both looking remarkably well—not that I have any reason for desiring it, but as I am not able to nurse you. Adieu!

2715. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 9, 1789.

My letters, Madam, except when they ought to hasten with my thanks for any new mark of your goodness, may flit backwards and forwards as often, and for as long as they please. They contain no novelty, and, like ugly persons, will not grow the worse for their age. Years and frequent confinement have thrown me so beside the current of society, that I wonder you have still patience with my correspondence. I have now been pinioned to my couch for a fortnight by the gout again, and am still carried thence to my bed by two servants. My fits are certainly very short, and attended by little pain; but they return so frequently, that they rather give me holidays than intervals. This is the fifth attack in twenty months. Still, I am quite content—I do not wish to be at races or watering-places.

I am sorry your Ladyship has lost an opportunity of being acquainted with Mrs. Allanson[1] (—the husband I never saw). She has great merit, sense, and spirit, acquired all the good of her mistress, the learned Aspasia, and none of her pretensions and affectations, of which I doubt she was a little weary, though nobody could behave with more respect and gratitude for really great obligations.

Letter 2715.—[1] Mrs. Alison, *née* Gregory. She formerly lived with Mrs. Montagu, 'the learned Aspasia.'

Aspasia has both knowledge and wit, with many virtues, but, mercy on us! they are both indefatigably for ever at one's service!

I allow all the merit of *Anacharsis*, and do believe your Ladyship reads it; but I know that its great vogue at Paris, on its first appearance, was during the first fortnight, when, to be sure, nobody had got through thirty pages of the first volume. I penetrated a great way, and though I was tired of it, it was not from any faults I found, but it did not interest me in the least. Mrs. Damer is a convert, and is now reading it. I broke off at the Lacedemonians, whom I abhor, though I allow the merit your Ladyship so justly admires in them, their brevity, and which you still more justly apply in wishing it to the *Tiers État*. Do *you* know, Madam, that my dear old friend, Madame du Deffand, had a mortal aversion to eloquence, though *she* herself, without knowing it, was more naturally eloquent than anybody? I doubt it will lose its credit a little, and that the tongue will not be the arbiter at last of the destiny of France. I see, in the papers, that the prelates of the Germanic provinces absorbed by France already murmur at the freedoms taken with their privileges by the *États*. For these three months I have thought it not unlikely that, considering the number of strong fortresses round the circumference of France, some might be seized by troops in different interests, and even some provinces dismembered. It is more probable than that the present chaos should subside into one regular compact government on a foundation totally new. That (the division) would be more beneficial to us and to Europe than the conquest of it.

I was disgusted, like you, Madam, at our pantomimes of the horrors of the Bastile; but they have almost estranged my pity for the exiles. Who can go and view such sanguinary farces without incredible insensibility?

My neighbour, the Duke of Clarence, is so popular, that if Richmond were a borough, and he had not attained his title, but still retained his idea of standing candidate, he would certainly be elected there. He pays his bills regularly himself, locks up his doors at night, that his servants may not stay out late, and never drinks but a few glasses of wine. Though the value of crowns is mightily fallen of late at market, it looks as if his Royal Highness thought they were still worth waiting for; nay, it is said that he tells his brothers that he shall be king before either—this is fair at least. My last letter from Lady Waldegrave gave a better:

Tuesday night, 13th.

I had just written the above words on Friday, Madam, when I was thunderstruck by a note from the Duchess, with an account of Lord Waldegrave's extreme danger—I cannot describe the alarm it gave me. My niece, too, being past her time, naturally so tender and so nervous, and so wrapt up in her Lord—I expected to lose both at once! Yesterday I was relieved by a much more favourable account than my best hopes could expect. His disorder has taken a most promising turn, by a vast discharge of bile, and all the letters speak of him as much better. Still I dare not be too sanguine; yet what a change from concluding him gone!

I can say nothing on the atrocious accounts from France, though the last accounts soften the first. One pities the impatient indiscretion of the King and Queen, but the treatment of them is unexampled! What an odious cowardly nation, to let their prince be seized and carried prisoner to his capital, with the most insulting cruel triumph, by a rabble of fish-women! I could almost use the Billingsgate of those furies to express scorn of their men!—and, if possible, my still greater contempt for their *États*, who set

out with assuming omnipotent power, and are trampled into the dirt by oyster-women!

What becomes of their great air-balloon, Necker, who has already broken several necks, and will soon burst himself, and be the sport of winds? and why does not Mademoiselle d'Éon return and put herself at the head of the *poissardes*? and carry over a code from that Maccabee, Lord George Gordon?

In short, is not France the most contemptible as well as the most *Iroquois* of nations? With any sense and any temper the *États* might have obtained a very reformed system of government: with none ready they threw down the whole fabric, and thought that the moment their tongues were loosened, they could prate themselves into a monarchic republic in which *le Roi* was to intimidate all Europe, provided he was the tool of Mirabeau and such scoundrels, and of a parcel of abbés and philosophers who thought they could pick out a model from all the various visions and controversies on government, and that a nation and all its laws, and all its debts, could wait till they had framed something on which no three of them would have agreed. I maintain that pert pedantry is the source of all their woes! and has unchained their natural insolent vindictive cruelty. They crouched under Maupeou and the Abbé Terray, who made the late King an absolute despot, and they treat the present inoffensive poor man as if he were a Louis Onze. They massacred poor old Foulon[2] in the most savage manner, while Calonne and the Archbishop of Sens[3] laugh at their rage: but did not they coolly gag and butcher Lally, who, though a tyrant, like themselves, had great merit towards his country? The

[2] Joseph François Foulon (1715-1789), appointed Contrôleur Général des Finances in place of Necker. He was hated by the people, who seized him and hanged him from a street lamp on July 22.

[3] Loménie de Brienne, sometime Minister of Finance.

Duchess of Polignac, whom I do not excuse, they would have used, had she not escaped, as they did Brunehault and Frédégonde, and as they did not use Isabel of Bavaria and Catherine of Medicis, who deserved no better—but at times they are as abject as at other times they are merciless!

To me their great demerit is that they disgrace the cause of liberty. In this paroxysm of anarchy they have murdered more persons without a shadow of trial, and in eight months, than are executed by legal forms at the instigation of a regular king in twenty years. If liberty is not tried by its peers, what matters whether there is one Nero or a million?

2716. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Oct. 29, 1789.

I am not at peace enough, Madam, to write much; yet, on the sole subject on which I can talk, it is a little relief to speak to those who know and feel how just my grief is; and as I ought to acknowledge your Ladyship's and Lord Ossory's letters, I will tell you the little I know. Lord Aylesford continued and does continue to pay every mark of respect and attention to dear Lord Waldegrave's [1] memory and family. His Lordship and his brothers attended the burial last Friday; and his Lordship has been so friendly as to accept the guardianship of the children, so they will not quite want a father.

Poor Lady Waldegrave is not yet brought to bed, and they think will go a week longer still. I flatter myself the respite is favourable, as she has passed the first dreadful shock. Her command of herself is as reasonable as can be desired for her safety; to expect more than resignation

Letter 2716.—[1] George, fourth Earl Waldegrave, died on Oct. 17, 1789, at Packington, Lord Aylesford's seat in Warwickshire.

and patience would be irrational. The Duchess stays till her delivery, and is so charmed with her melancholy submission to her fate, and with her piety, and with the enchanting goodness of Lord and Lady Aylesford, that in one of her letters to me she says, in her usual expressive style, 'In short, to learn to live, or to learn to die, one must come to Packington.'

I will endeavour, Madam, to imitate my nieces, and act with some reason, that is, so far suspend my sorrow as not to make it a constant theme to others: though a thousand reasons make it a loss to me that I cannot cease to feel while I remain here: but I will be silent!—Your Ladyship's most devoted, &c.

2717. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 4, 1789.

I am not surprised, my dear Madam, that the notice of my illness should have stimulated your predominant quality, your sensibility. I cannot do less in return than relieve it immediately, by assuring you that I am in a manner recovered; and should have gone out before this time, if my mind were as much at ease as my poor limbs. I have passed five months most uncomfortably; the two last most unhappily. In June and September I had two bad falls by my own lameness and weakness, and was much bruised; while I was witness to the danger, and then to the death, of my invaluable niece, Lady Dysart. She was angelic, and has left no children. The unexpected death of Lord Waldegrave, one of the most amiable of men, has not only deprived me of him, but has opened a dreadful scene of calamities! He and my niece were the happiest and most domestic of couples.

Your kind inquiries after me have drawn these details

from me, for which I make no excuse: good nature never grudges its pity. I, who love to force your gravity to smile, am seriously better pleased to indulge your benevolence with a subject of esteem, which, though moving your compassion, will be accompanied by no compunction. I will now answer your letter. Your plea, that not composition, but business, has occasioned your silence, is no satisfaction to *me*. In my present anxious solitude I have again read *Bonner* and *Florio*, and the *Bas Bleu*; and do you think I am pleased to learn that you have not been writing? Who is it says something like this line?—

Hannah will *not* write, and Lactilla[1] *will*.

They who think her *Earl Goodwin* will outgo Shakespeare might be in the right, if they specified in what way. I believe she may write worse than he sometimes did, though that is not easy; but to excel him—oh, I have not words adequate to my contempt for those who can suppose such a possibility!

I am sorry, very sorry, for what you tell me of poor Barrett's fate. Though he did write worse than Shakespeare, it is great pity he was told so, as it killed him; and I rejoice that I did not publish a word in contradiction of the letters which he said Chatterton sent to me, as I was advised to do. I might have laughed at the poor man's folly, and then I should have been miserable to have added a grain to the poor man's mortification.

You rejoice *me*, not my vanity, by telling me my idea of a mechanic succedaneum to the labour of negroes is not visionary, but thought practicable. Oh, how I wish I understood sugar and ploughs, and could marry them! Alas! I understand nothing useful. My head is as un-mechanic

Letter 2717.—[1] Mrs. Yearsley, the Bristol milkwoman. Her tragedy *Earl Godwin* was first performed at Bath on Nov. 2, 1789.

as it is un-arithmetic, un-geometric, un-metaphysic, un-commercial: but will not some one of those superior heads to whom you have talked on my indigested hint reduce it to practicability? How a feasible scheme would stun those who call humanity romantic, and show, from the books of the Custom House, that murder is a great improvement of the revenue! Even the present situation of France is favourable. Could not Mr. Wilberforce[2] obtain to have the enfranchisement of the negroes started there? The Jews are claiming their natural rights there; and blacks are certainly not so great defaulters as the Hebrews, though they too have undergone ample persecutions. Methinks, as Lord George Gordon is in correspondence with the *États*, he has been a little remiss in not signing the petition of those of his new communion.

The *États* are detestable and despicable; and, in fact, guilty of the outrages of the Parisian and provincial mobs. The mob of twelve hundred, not legislators, but dissolvers of all laws, unchained the mastiffs that had been tied up, and were sure to worry all who fell in their way. To annihilate all laws, however bad, and to have none ready to replace them, was proclaiming anarchy. What should one think of a mad doctor, who should let loose a lunatic, suffer him to burn Bedlam, chop off the heads of the keepers, and then consult with some students in physic on the gentlest mode of treating delirium? By a late vote I see that the twelve hundred praters are reduced to five hundred: *vive la reine Billingsgate!* the Thalestris who has succeeded Louis Quatorze! A committee of those Amazons stopped the Duke of Orléans, who, to use their style, I believe is not *a barrel the better herring.*

[2] William Wilberforce (1759–1833), who took up the cause of the abolition of slavery in 1787, and who made a long speech in condemnation of it in the House of Commons in May 1789.

Your reflections on Vertot's passion for revolutions are admirable, and yet it is natural for an historian to like to describe times of action. Halcyon days do not furnish matter for talents; they are like the virtuous couple in a comedy, a little insipid. Mr. Manly and Lady Grace, Mellefont and Cynthia[3], do not interest one much. Indeed, in a tragedy where they are unhappy, they give the audience full satisfaction, and no envy. The newspapers, no doubt, thought Dr. Priestley could not do better than to espouse you. He certainly would be very judicious, could he obtain your consent; but, alas! you would soon squabble about Socinian*ism*, or some of those *isms*. To tell you the truth, I hate all those Constantinopolitan jargons, that set people together by the ears about pedantic terms. When you apply scholastic phrases as happily and genteelly as you do in your *Bas Bleu*, they are delightful; but don't muddify your charming simplicity with controversial distinctions, that will sour your sweet piety. Sects are the bane of charity, and have deluged the world with blood.

I do not mean, by what I am going to say, to extort another letter from you before I have the pleasure of seeing you at Hampton; but I really shall be much obliged to you for a single line soon, only to tell me if Miss Williams is at Stoke[4] with the Duchess of Beaufort. To a short note, cannot you add a short P.S. on the fate of *Earl Goodwin*?

Lac mihi—novum non frigore defit.

Adieu! my amiable friend!

Yours most sincerely,

Hor. Walpole.

[3] Mr. Manly and Lady Grace are characters in *The Provoked Husband*; Mellefont and Cynthia are characters in *The Double Dealer*.

[4] Stoke Gifford, in Gloucestershire.

2718. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, Nov. 8, 1789.

I have not yet received that essential consolation, Madam, of Lady Waldegrave's being safely delivered; and they even think she may go on a month longer—a cruel suspense! But the Duchess says she is stronger, and in no danger of not being able to go through her labour; but after the false hopes we had of her Lord for three days, I am daunted, and dare not be sanguine.

Your Ladyship's letter, which I could not answer then, was very judicious, indeed, on the French *distractions*. *Distracted* they really seem, and worse than savages, for in a state of nature the hurt one man can do to his neighbour is very limited; but a whole nation turned loose to their passions, with all the implements of mischief that have been devised during the improvements of society, and groaning with resentments for oppression, is a million of times worse. Still I can excuse the mob sooner than the *États*, who proceed in rending all ties, and overturning all systems, without repairing or replacing any; and increase the confusion by new demolitions, so that I am sometimes tempted to refine so much as to suppose that the concealed friends of the crown, the nobility and the Church, encourage the general extravagance, in hopes that all orders but the populace will unite, through interest and indignation, to restore the old system. This would have some meaning, though not easily put in practice, as the whole army has been inspired with the same fury as the mob.

Perhaps I am too candid, for the *États* set out so foolishly, that I know not why I should suspect them of any sense. Their early debate on the title of the King of Spain to the crown, and their discussion on their own King's style, were

such characteristics of absurdity, that it is too charitable to impute a grain of sense to them. They might as well have agitated a question whether Louis Seize should be called Louis-le-Gros, or Louis-le-Simple. One would think he had convoked his heralds, not his *États*. What would Europe have thought, if, when Sir E. Hawke burnt so many of their men-of-war, the French Academy had consulted how their new ships should be christened? That would have been a puerility worthy of the *Quarante*, and a theme for an epigram on them. The Jews, I see, have addressed those sage legislators—I do not wonder. *They* crucified their King, and called Him, on His cross, King of the Jews, not of Judæa; and no doubt, if the *poissardes* offered to deliver King Louis, the Hebrews would cry out, 'Not him, but Lord George Barabbas.'

I have still some acquaintance left in France for whom I feel much; some are come over or coming, as Mesdames de Boufflers, and the Duchesse de Lauzun, now Biron, and Madame de Cambis; I have not yet been able to go to them. There are some others who only make me smile, or worse. One is an old Abbesse de St. Antoine, sister of the Prince of Beauvau; she has sent her church-plate to the fund of contributions. You will be diverted by a story I will tell you of her. The last time I was in France, I went with Madame du Deffand to sup at Roissi, Monsieur de Caraman's, whose wife is sister of Madame de Cambis, and niece of the Beauvaus. There we found that old St. Antoine, and a nun instead of a pig. She had been at *les eaux*, and then they may sleep at a relation's on the road. I desired my dear old friend to present me to Madame l'Abbesse, and tell her how good her parents the Prince and Princesse de Craon had been to me formerly at Florence. The old she-hog drew up with all the pride of the house of Lorraine, of which she is a spurious twig, and replied,

'Je suis bien aise, Monsieur, que Monsieur mon père (who was not her *père*) et Madame ma mère ont eu'—and then she paused—'*l'avantage* de connoître Monsieur.' Madame du Deffand, who could not bear her impertinence to me, cried out, 'Pardy, Madame, vous auriez bien pu dire *l'honneur*.'

I have not *Anacharsis* here, Madam, but I recollect that Arsame was a flattering picture of Monsieur de Choiseul, who had great parts, and was not a severe minister, but very daring, dashing, and whose good nature would not have checked his ambition from doing any splendid mischief, or from spilling blood by battalions, though perhaps not by a basinful. France owes much of its pecuniary distresses to his waste and political intrigues. From what an abyss have their extravagances of all kinds saved us, if we have the wisdom to profit of our tranquillity and advantages! Among the greater points of security at home, of the safety of India, of our commerce extending as theirs must languish, and of the recovery of the empire of the ocean by the decay of their marine, we ought to reckon not only the influx of their money, but the retention of our own, which used to be lavished so widely in France. I made a random computation above twenty years ago (and calculation is not my bright side) that the English wasted annually in France above 500,000*l*. When I was there in 1765, their late King said that by the returns from Calais 40,000 English had passed through there, though but two years after the Peace: if half were tradesmen, cooks, and barbers *pour s'instruire*, not one went and returned for so little as five pounds. Though that was a tide that had been dammed up, I believe the emigrations of late years have been as numerous. Two years ago there were above sixty English families at Nice; and a year ago there were said to be 40,000 English in France and Lorraine—numbers

indeed from economy; but thrift itself does not live in France on French money, nor on what it proposes to save: nor is it easy to save, where everything is charged so high to a *Milor Anglois*. But I shall drop wisdom and supputation, and return to *Anacharsis*. The Abbé Barthélemy was devoted to the Duchesse de Choiseul, and was always at Chanteloup, and she had obtained two or three emoluments for him: the incense to her husband, I believe, was offered in compliment to her.

To divert my thoughts a little in the many melancholy, lonely hours that I have passed in these three months, and to turn them to the only reading I could relish in the present position of Europe, modern history, I have been reading again, as I have often done, Voltaire's Universal History. I suppose, from the various circumstances that have struck me with regard to the actual state of France, I admire it more than ever, though I always thought it his *chef-d'œuvre*. It is a marvellous mass both of genius and sagacity, and the quintessence of political wisdom as well as of history. Any one chapter on a single reign, as those of Philip II, Henry IV, Richelieu, Elizabeth, Cromwell, is a complete picture of their characters and of their times. Whatever may be said of his incorrectness in some facts, his observations and inferences are always just and profound. I wish you would read it again, Madam; there are twenty passages that look as if written within these six months. More than once he allows the cruel nature of his countrymen in turbulent times. The story of the whole modern world is comprised in less space than that of the three centuries of diminutive Greece in the tedious Travels of Anacharsis, who makes you remember rather than reflect. On the other hand, I am sorry I cannot agree with your Ladyship; Mr. Gibbon never tires me. He comprises a vast body and period of history too; however, I do wish he had been as

lucid as Voltaire, or, to speak more justly, that he had arranged his matter better, for by vast leaps backwards and forwards, or by not drawing nearer together contemporary times, you have forgotten the personages to whom he returns; but how I run on! I fear my confinement and solitude have drawn me into trespassing on your Ladyship's patience: luckily my small paper reminds me that a letter is not a dissertation, though I doubt my close, little hand sometimes sufficiently gratifies its propensity to prattling, when it is in train.—Good night, Madam.

2719. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 26, 1789.

I do not know in which of your palaces your Ladyship is resident at present; but, not having mentioned your return to Ampthill, I conclude you still in Northamptonshire. If I mistake, it will not signify; my letter, if stale by taking a circuit, will be just the same, for I have nothing fresh to tell you, Madam, and only answer a paragraph or two in your last, out of decorum.

I said nothing of the Duc d'Orléans, as knowing nothing, and from not thinking him worth inquiry. He appears to me like one of the two gentlemen who often open the first scene of a French tragedy, and then have no more part in the play. I have been twice in town to see three of the refugees with whom I used to live very much at Paris, the Comtesse de Boufflers, the Duchesse de Lauzun, now of Biron, and Madame de Cambis. I cannot say that they once named their princely ambassador. Madame de Boufflers has lost a great part of her income, and is mortified, as she may well be, at quitting her beautiful English *parc* at Auteuil. Indeed, the horrors they all relate make one

abhor Lord Stanhope and his *priestly* firebrands who would raise Presbyterian conflagrations here. One story will touch you; the little Dauphin[1], who is but four years old, and a beautiful child, was learning fables: the one in waiting ended by saying of the animal that was the subject of it, that, though she had had great misfortunes, she became at last *heureuse comme des reines.* He said, 'Hah! toutes les reines ne sont pas heureuses, car maman pleure depuis le matin jusqu'au soir.'

It was said a year ago that a whole *armoire* of Madame de Sévigné's letters to a Monsieur de la Grange had been found; but I did not believe it, nor have heard any more of them. I have two of her original letters; Lady Rivers brought me a long one the last time she was in England, but it is one of the printed. The other the Comte de Grave obtained for me from Monsieur de Castellane, who married a granddaughter of Pauline; but it is one of the very *larmoyantes*, written at Nos Filles de St. Marie, on one of the days of Madame de Grignan's departures. I have, besides, an original letter of Madame de Maintenon, which was given to me at St. Cyr by one of the nuns; but I laid it up so carefully somewhere, that I cannot find it. Monsieur de Grave is an exceedingly good sort of man: he lodged at St. Joseph, in the apartment above Madame du Deffand, and was very intimate with her. It was he who went with me and Mrs. Cholmondeley and another English lady to St. Cyr, where we passed five hours, by permission of the Bishop of Chartres, and I sat in the Maintenon's own seat, during the mass, and afterwards heard the young ladies pensioners act dialogues written for them by their foundress, whom the abbess told me she remembered—but she seemed to remember nothing else.

LETTER 2719.—[1] Louis, second surviving son of Louis XVI, after whose death he was recognized as King by the loyalists. He died a prisoner in the Temple in 1795.

Taylor's[2] book was shown to me this summer by one of those wiseacres that call themselves learned men, and who told me it was tremendous. I was neither alarmed nor curious: yet, on your Ladyship's notice, I borrowed the *Monthly Review*, and find that the world's future religion is to be founded on a blundered translation of an almost unintelligible commentator on Plato. I guess, however, that the religion this new apostle recommends is, not belief in the pantheon of Pagan divinities, but the creed of the philosophers, who really did not believe in their idols, but whose metaphysics were frequently as absurd; and yet this half-witted Taylor prefers them to Bacon and Locke, who were almost the first philosophers who introduced common sense into their writings, and were as clear as Plato was unintelligible—because he did not understand himself. Taylor will have no success; not because nonsense is not suited to making proselytes — witness the Methodists, Moravians, Baron Swedenborg, and Loutherbourg the painter; but it should not be learned nonsense, which only the *litterati* think they understand after long study. Absurdities, announced only to the ear, and easily retained by the memory, have otherguess operation; not that I have any objection to Mr. Taylor's making proselytes—the more religions the better. If we had but two in the island, they would cut one another's throats for power. When there is plenty of beliefs, the professors only gain customers here and there from rival shops, and make more controversies than converts.

Lady Waldegrave is not yet delivered, and her parting with the Duchess, who left her last week, was a great addition to her grief.

You order me to name my own health, and therefore I do, Madam. I am quite recovered; and, having just had

[2] Probably Thomas Taylor (1758–1835).

a fit of the gout, I depend on its not returning, and have ventured to stay here through all our deluges, and have not suffered in the least. It is very kind in your Ladyship to make that inquiry, but I cannot endure that jackanapes-paper *The World* notifying so extremely an unimportant circumstance as my recovery to so many persons who cannot possibly care a straw about me. A clergyman last week brought me three paragraphs that he had cut out of *Worlds* with my name in them. Surely the writer might knock down better game than an old valetudinarian sitting quietly by his fireside in the country, and who never even sees his paper. It is very hard one may not be super-annuated when one pleases!

2720. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 6, 1789.

I am afraid, Madam, I can give but unsatisfactory answers to most of your Ladyship's questions, for my memory is much upon its wane; and my information is very slender. Both the King and Queen have been extremely concerned for Lord Waldegrave; and the King, I believe, did defer giving away the regiment for a month, that Lady Waldegrave might be benefited by the delay. She was brought to bed of a daughter on the 2nd, and I trust is in a good way.

My meaning about the Armada tapestry, I suppose, was that the Republic had more taste than James and Charles, and hung it where it would often be seen: no particular compliment could be meant to the House of Lords, which was no longer a House of Lords then—but I protest I cannot answer for what I said so long ago, and which was not worth a thought since.

I can still less give a positive answer about Madame de Sévigné's letter, but that it is what I told your Ladyship,

a *larmoyante* one, and not about any duel. I have entirely forgot how M. de Grave got it; and am quite ignorant whether the M. de Castellane whom I knew is living or not. He was not a descendant of Pauline, but had married one. I never saw a picture of Pauline, nor do I know who possesses her house or Grignan. George Selwyn was at the latter, and has told me to whom it belongs—but it is gone out of my head.

I did hear of Lord Orford's letters on astronomy in a book of agriculture, but I have had too many deplorable proofs of his lunacy to be curious after more.

The print of Necker I return, Madam, but I protest I do not understand any part of it—however, I am not sorry to see that even in such trumpery they imitate us clumsily.

The Berrys are at Teddington, and it is on their account that I have stayed here later than I ever did. They go to town next week, and so shall I. I hope I may not be quite so dry and dull there, as I am to-day; but if you had not ordered me to return the print, I think I should have postponed my *no* answers to your queries, for I am a total blank at present, and know nothing to amuse you. Indeed no mortal is so barren, when I have nothing at the point of my pen to say—when I have, it gallops sufficiently.

George has called while I was writing, and says Grignan belongs now to a Monsieur Dorlière—or did before the *États* met—

Hemp may grow now—where Troy town stood!

2721. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 12, 1789.

I give your Ladyship abundant thanks for your congratulations on Lady Waldegrave's delivery: she and her little orphan are well, and I trust safe.

I return your Ladyship the *Herveyan* letter, which is a more proper word than *frantic*: it did not surprise me at all: his father was always attempting to excite compassion by the most virulent abuse on his nearest relations. Besides, I have seen and received parallel epistles. I had one a year and a half ago: I made no answer, but told Mrs. E. Hervey[1], his mother's and his most kind friend, that I could not refuse giving a little money to a man of quality, with whose family I had been so much acquainted all my life; and did give her five guineas for him. He, I know from Lady Aylesbury, has grossly abused Mrs. E. Hervey since, to whom he has had great obligations. He wrote to me again this spring; I threw his letter into the fire, and sent no reply. I would not hinder Lord Ossory's charity, but he certainly had better not write, for when a gentleman can beg in that abject manner, he would probably print the letter, like many of those worthless beings whose flattery and scurrility are employed indifferently for half a crown.

I was in town on Wednesday, and was told that the Emperor had made a truce for two months with the Flemings, which was likely to be followed by a peace. I am glad that they will be relieved, and that *he* is baffled and mortified. There is as wide a difference between Joseph and Louis as between their present situations. The latter, without being an aggressor, was willing to amend a very bad government, and has been treated like a Sicilian Dionysius, and has seen numbers of his innocent subjects massacred, &c. Joseph, with the flippancy of a French prater, has violated oaths and laws, and plundered, in order to support an unjust war of ambition, while he is the tool of the northern Semiramis, whom I call by a name that sounds

LETTER 2721.—[1] Elizabeth, only child of Captain Hon. William Hervey, third son of first Earl of Bristol. She was born in 1730, and was still living in 1800. Boswell mentions her literary assemblies and Johnson's fondness for her.

quite Russian, *Catharine Slay-Czar*—apropos, Madam, have you seen Mr. Cambridge's excellent verses, called *The Progress of Liberty*? They were printed last Wednesday in a newspaper called *The Times*, but there ascribed to a young lady. They are as happy a composition, in their way, as *Bonner's Ghost.*

Have you heard, too, that one of the wings of Houghton, not Houghton your cousin, is burnt down? I know not by what accident. I said, burnt *down*; but stone walls, and such walls, are not easily consumed. In my father's time one of the cellars was on fire, but only a door was destroyed. As the gallery is burnt, the glorious pictures have escaped—or are reserved to be consumed in a wooden palace on the first revolution at Petersburg.

You will please, Madam, to direct your next commands to Berkeley Square, whither I shall go on Tuesday for some time.—Yours, &c.

2722. To John Pinkerton.

Dear Sir, Berkeley Square, Dec. 15, 1789.

You will probably be surprised at not hearing from me so long. Indeed, I hope you will have been so, for as it has been occasioned by involuntary neglect, I had rather you should have reproached me in your own mind, than have been thoughtless of me and indifferent. The truth is, that between great misfortunes, accidents, and illness, I have passed six melancholy months. I have lost two of my nearest and most beloved relations, Lady Dysart and Lord Waldegrave. Her illness terminated but in September; his, besides the grievous loss of him, left me in the greatest anxiety for his widow, who thought herself at the end of her pregnancy, but was not delivered till (above two months after his death) a fortnight ago.

Letter 2722.—Incomplete in C.

In the midst of these distresses I had two very bad falls in June and September, by which I bruised myself exceedingly, and the last of which brought on a fit of the gout. In such situations I was very incapable of entertaining anybody, or even of being entertained, and saw but few of my own unhappy family; or I should have asked the favour of your company at Strawberry Hill.

I am now pretty well, and came to town but to-day, when I take the first moment of telling you so; that whenever you come to London, I may have a chance of having the pleasure of seeing you. I did not miss the pleasure of reading your solid confutation of one of your antagonists in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

I am, with sincere regard and esteem, dear Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2723. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 26, 1789.
End of an extraordinary year!

IT is too late in the month, Madam, to return your Christmas wishes, and too late in my life to repay your most agreeable new-year's gift of Lord Holland's verses, which *talk* good sense with so much ease, that instead of prophesying that he will be a poet, I will boldly venture to foretell that he will be of a much higher class, and will be worthy of his grandfather and uncle. He cannot think half a quarter so well of me, if he imagines that I cared a straw about a trumpery pane of glass, that had actually been cracked and mended before.—

The old man tells his story—

but does not fret about a bit of painted glass, as Lord

Holland will find, if he will do me the honour of coming again to Strawberry when I am there. He has made himself free of my house as a noble author, though I shall not live to record him.

Of the new noble authoress dowager I had not heard a word: be so good in your next, Madam, to tell me if her *Tractate* (as Milton called his[1], and which I suppose was a more severe institution than her Ladyship's) is published, and by what title.

I did not know Mrs. Hervey's new novel was published yet; I saw it announced some time ago, but have forgotten the title: it will keep cold. The former was well written, but the ideas very stale. I am tired of books that add nothing new to the mass. I cannot say the Princes are like our novels: their behaviour, though negative, has certainly introduced *variety* into *manners*. 'Nous avons changé tout cela' is not very sage, when Europe is so disposed to *changer tout cela*.

The town says, but I cannot believe it, that the Brabanters have offered their vacant coronet to the Bishop of Osnaburg[2]. Humphrey Duke of Gloucester espoused Duchess Jacqueline, but neither kept her nor the duchy. I have not looked on the map, but I think both Osnaburg and Hanover lie nearer to Vienna than Brabant. It seems to me too that the Right Reverend Father in God has a better chance than he would have of remaining sovereign of Flanders; for *bouleversées* as Flanders and France are, our experience is not old enough yet to convince me that the fermentation in either, especially in the latter, will not have a notable revulsion. In France it is a frenzy, which I believe will have the same effect as in the human body—it will be cured or make the patient destroy himself. Their government was detestable, and

LETTER 2723.—[1] *A Small Tractate of Education*, published in 1673.
[2] The Duke of York.

might have been much corrected; but to dissolve all government, without the shadow of a system ready to replace it, and to imagine that twenty-four millions can be moulded into an entirely new constitution at once totally repugnant to every law that had existed, and that such bungling operators as *Messrs. les États* have shown themselves can tinker up by detached votes such a frame of legislation as will suit so vast a kingdom, does not enter into my conception. They have really pleased nobody internally but the most ignorant and unhappy peasantry, who have been let loose from all restraints, and in a manner instructed to gratify their spleen. I pity them, who will probably be exposed to the still worse excesses of an army without discipline and without pay. But what signify my reveries? I shall neither live to see them hatched nor addled.

Many happy new years to Ampthill, and a less unhappy one than the last half to—Yours, &c.

2724. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 30, 1789.

Though I have nothing but thanks for Lord Holland's verses to send you, Madam, I must send them. I am extremely pleased with his variety of metres, and, if I may decide, prefer his heroics. If I may criticize, his trochaics are not always perfect, now and then wanting a syllable, as in 'I resolve to perform whatever 's my duty,' and the next, and in one or two others. I do not delight in that measure, but at least it should be complete to the ear. He is excellent in rhymes, and so is Lord Ossory too, whose poetry I am very glad to have gained, by the by. It is refreshing to read natural easy poetry, full of sense and humour, instead of that unmeaning, laboured, painted style now in fashion, of the Della Cruscas and Co., of which it is impossible ever

to retain a couplet, no more than one could remember how a string of emeralds and rubies were placed in a necklace. Poetry has great merit, if it is the vehicle and preservative of sense, but it is not to be taken in change for it.

I do not, certainly, mean to pay Lord Holland for his verses, by sending him my fourth volume, which, though in prose, is no work of sense; it is merely to complete his set of a register; and he shall have it, if your Ladyship will be so good as to tell me how to convey it.

A knock at the door saves your Ladyship and me from adding any nonsense to my letter.

2725. To Thomas Astle.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 30, 1790.

Mr. Walpole begs Mr. Astle's pardon for the trouble he is going to give him, but shall be extremely obliged to him if he can let him know what Mr. West gave at Lord Oxford's sale for the seal of Edmund, King of Sicily[1], or what Mr. Brander[2] gave for it at Mr. West's. A line will be sufficient.

2726. To Miss Hannah More.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 20, 1790.

It is very provoking that people must always be hanging or drowning themselves, or going mad, that you forsooth, Mistress, may have the diversion of exercising your pity and good nature, and charity, and intercession, and all that bead-roll of virtues that make you so troublesome and amiable, when you might be ten times more agreeable by writing things that would not cost one above half a crown at a time. You are an absolutely walking hospital, and

Letter 2725. — Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Dr. H. T. Scott.

[1] Edmund Plantagenet (surnamed Crouchback), son of Henry III, was, when only eight years old, invested by the Pope's legate as King of Sicily, but never obtained possession of that kingdom.

[2] Gustavus Brander (1720–1787), a merchant of Swedish descent, who was also an antiquary and collector.

travel about into lone and by-places, with your doors open to house stray casualties! I wish at least that you would have some children yourself, that you might not be plaguing one for all the pretty brats that are starving and friendless. I suppose it was some such goody two or three thousand years ago that suggested the idea of an alma-mater, suckling the three hundred and sixty-five bantlings of the Countess of Hainault. Well, as your newly-adopted pensioners have *two* babes, I insist on your accepting *two* guineas for them instead of one at present (that is, when you shall be present). If you cannot circumscribe your own charities, you shall not stint mine, Madam, who can afford it much better, and who must be dunned for alms, and do not scramble over hedges and ditches in searching for opportunities of flinging away my money on good works. I employ mine better at auctions, and in buying pictures and baubles, and hoarding curiosities, that in truth I cannot keep long, but that will last *for ever* in my catalogue, and make me immortal! Alas! will they cover a multitude of sins? Adieu! I cannot jest after *that* sentence.

Yours most sincerely,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2727. To Miss Hannah More.

March 11th.

I HEARD at Mrs. Ord's[1] last night that you are not well. I would fain flatter myself that you had only a pain in your apprehension of the coaches full of mob that were crowding the streets; but as I do not take for granted whatever will excuse me from caring, as people that are indifferent readily

LETTER 2727. — Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Messrs. Maggs Bros.

[1] Anne, daughter of William Dillingham, and widow of William Ord, of Whitefield, Northumberland. Mrs. Ord was a friend of Miss Burney, and gave literary parties.

do, I beg to hear from yourself how you are—I do not mean from your own hand, but lips—send me an exact message; and if it is a good one, it will give real pleasure to

Yours most sincerely,

H. Walpole.

P.S. Mrs. *Prospero*, who is not my *Miranda*, was there last night with a true blue embroidered favour, that cast a ten times more important colour on her accents, and made her as potent in her own eyes as *Sycorax*.

2728. To the Hon. Thomas Walpole.

Dear Sir, April 9, 1790.

I was obliged to go out as I received your obliging communication, which I now return with many thanks. The letter is uncommonly sensible, clear, and descriptive, and paints not only what is, but what certainly will happen—the last confusion. And, though the nation does not yet seem to turn, I am persuaded that it will, as soon as any considerable convulsion happens. And common sense tells me what numerous thousands must be ready to join and promote a re-revolution. How that will terminate no foresight can predict, much less in favour of whom. Not, I fear, of liberty, for, however active patriotism may be at the outset of reformation, self-interest and ambition are endowed with much more perseverance.

My poor lame fingers cannot well say more. They produce daily so much chalk that I could write with it on black paper as easily as on white with ink.

Your much obliged humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

Letter 2728.—Not in C.; reprinted from *Some Unpublished Letters of Horace Walpole*, edited by Sir Spencer Walpole, pp. 106–7.

2729. To the Earl of Carlisle.

My Lord, Berkeley Square, April 10, 1790.

I had sent my servant to the other end of the town to Mr. Pinkerton's bookseller, or I should not have been so late before I acknowledged the great pleasure I received from the beautiful and genteel lines[1] with which your Lordship was so very good as to honour me yesterday. It is very fortunate for Sir Joshua that the justice you have done to his merit will long survive his works, and will convince posterity that he was the real founder of an English School—if such a School shall continue.

Your Lordship has as justly described his foreign predecessors and the characters of their works; and you have said in few lines what I had attempted in far too many in prose. Yet I am so pleased, that allow me, my Lord, to say, that you will be very blameable, if, with so poetic a talent, you do not employ it oftener to vanquish competitors more worthy of you.

I have the honour to be, my Lord, with the greatest respect, admiration, and gratitude,

Your Lordship's
Most obedient and most obliged
Humble servant,
Hor. Walpole.

P.S. Your Lordship has but half a guinea more to pay for the volume that accompanies this.

Letter 2729.—Not in C.; printed from original in possession of the Earl of Carlisle.

[1] Lines addressed to Sir Joshua Reynolds, on his resignation of the presidency of the Royal Academy in February 1790.

2730. To ———.

April 30, 1790.

You have for many years been so obliging to me, that I presume on that kindness to recommend to you the bearer, Mr. Pinkerton, whose great abilities, various knowledge and indefatigable industry in the pursuit of literary truth, cannot want so poor and inferior countenance as mine to introduce him to one of congenial zeal in the cause of erudition. Mr. Pinkerton, Sir, is engaged in elucidating the very ancient history of Scotland from the most authentic memorials that exist. He has been informed that in your most precious treasury of MSS. are several antique Scottish charters and other documents, and he could not learn that information without learning at the same time how benevolent and indulgent a patron you are of the devotees to historic antiquity. Mr. Pinkerton is a man of strict honour, and I will answer that he will not abuse your condescension if you will favour him with a view of whatever may suit his object. On me you will confer a new and particular obligation, and it will be a pleasure to me too to have formed an acquaintance between two gentlemen to whom these islands are and will be so much indebted.

I have the honour to be, with great regard, Sir,

Your very grateful

And most obedient humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

LETTER 2730.—Not in C.; now first printed (original in possession of Mr. T. D. Enys).

2731. To Richard Gough.

Dear Sir, Berkeley Square, May 17, 1790.

I have the pleasure of telling you that Lord Monson[1] has acquainted me with his having brought his old portraits to town, and that you may see them at his house in Albemarle Street; but they are so much decayed that he does not propose to have them repaired.—If you should be coming to town, I will beg you to give me previous notice, and I will be ready to attend you to his Lordship's house; but I must know it overnight, that I may apprise Lord Monson; and I should wish to hear from you in time, that I may not be at Strawberry Hill, whither I go frequently now the season is so fine. I am, with great regard,

Your much obliged humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

2732. To John Pinkerton.

Strawberry Hill, May 26, 1790.

I am sorry I was out of town when you did me the favour of calling. I could have shown you a very Jesuitic letter from the prelate[1] in answer to Lady D.'s application at my request; and of which I should have told you if I had conceived any hope from it.

I did not at all expect any success from her or my application: I would not refuse you to apply, but I know that I have no credit; and, as I obtain nothing but denials and evasions, I am always most unwilling to solicit what I have no chance

Letter 2731.—Not in C.; reprinted from Nichols's *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. vi. p. 291.

[1] John Monson (1753–1806), third Baron Monson.

Letter 2732.—Not in C.; reprinted from Pinkerton's *Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 252.

[1] The Archbishop of Canterbury.

of procuring, and what, I assure you, nothing should make me ask for myself. I have not been averse from proving to you that I would have served you if I could; but interest, you perceive, I have none at all. I heartily wish your merit may find more substantial friends than your very insignificant humble servant, &c.

2733. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, June 25, 1790.

I am glad at least that you was not fetched to town on last Tuesday, which was as hot as if Phaeton had once more gotten into his papa's curricle and driven it along the lower road; but the old King has resumed the reins again, and does not allow us a handful more of beams than come to our northern share. I am glad, too, that I was not summoned also to the *Fitzroyal* arrangement; it was better to be singed here, than exposed between two such fiery furnaces as Lady Southampton and my niece Keppel. I pity Charles Fox to be kept on the Westminster gridiron. Before I came out of town, I was diverted by a story from the hustings: one of the mob called to Fox, 'Well, Charley, are not you sick of your *coalition*?' 'Poor gentleman!' cried an old woman in the crowd, 'why should not he like a *collation*?'

I am very sorry Mrs. Damer is so tormented, but I hope the new inflammation will relieve her. As I was writing that sentence this morning, Mesdames de Boufflers came to see me from Richmond, and brought a Comte de Moranville to see my house. The puerile pedants of their *États* are going to pull down the statues of Louis Quatorze, like their silly ancestors, who proposed to demolish the tomb of John Duke of Bedford. The Vicomte de Mirabeau is arrested

Letter 2733.—Collated with original in possession of Earl Waldegrave.

somewhere for something, perhaps for one of his least crimes; in short, I am angry that the cause of liberty is profaned by such fools and rascals. If the two German kings make peace, as you hear and as I expected, the Brabanters, who seem not to have known much better what to do with their revolution, will be the first sacrifice on the altar of peace.

I stick fast at the beginning of the first volume of Bruce, though I am told it is the most entertaining; but I am sick of his vanity, and (I believe) of his want of veracity; I am sure, of his want of method and of his obscurity.

I hope my wives were not at Park Place in your absence: the loss of them is irreparable to me, and I tremble to think how much more I shall feel it in three months, when I am to part with them for—who can tell how long? Adieu!

2734. To the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, June 26, 1790.

I do not forget your Lordship's commands, though I do recollect my own inability to divert you. Every year at my advanced time of life would make more reasonable my plea of knowing nothing worth repeating, especially at this season. The general topic of elections is the last subject to which I could listen: there is not one about which I care a straw; and I believe your Lordship quite as indifferent. I am not much more *au fait* of war or peace; I hope for the latter, nay and expect it, because it is not yet war. Pride and anger do not deliberate to the middle of the campaign; and I believe even the great incendiaries are more intent on making a good bargain than on saving their honour. If they save lives, I care not who is the better politician; and, as I am not to be their judge, I do not

inquire what false weights they fling into the scales. Two-thirds of France, who are not so humble as I, seem to think they can entirely new-model the world with metaphysical compasses; and hold that no injustice, no barbarity, need to be counted in making the experiment. Such legislators are sublime empirics, and in their universal benevolence have very little individual sensibility. In short, the result of my reflections on what has passed in Europe for these latter centuries is, that tyrants have no consciences, and reformers no feeling; and the world suffers both by the plague and by the cure. What oceans of blood were Luther and Calvin the authors of being spilt! The late French government was detestable; yet I still doubt whether a civil war will not be the consequence of the revolution, and then what may be the upshot? Brabant was grievously provoked; is it sure that it will be emancipated? For how short a time do people who set out on the most just principles advert to their first springs of motion, and retain consistency? Nay, how long can promoters of revolutions be sure of maintaining their own ascendant? They are like projectors, who are commonly ruined; while others make fortunes on the foundation laid by the inventors.

I am always your Lordship's very devoted humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2735. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Wednesday night, July 1790.

IT is certainly not from having anything to tell you that I reply so soon, but as the most agreeable thing I can do in my confinement. The gout came into my heel the night before last, perhaps from the deluge and damp. I increased it yesterday by limping about the house with a party I had to breakfast. To-day I am lying on the settee, unable to

walk alone, or even to put on a slipper. However, as I am much easier this evening, I trust it will go off.

I do not love disputes, and shall not argue with you about Bruce; but, if you like him, you shall not choose an author for me. It is the most absurd, obscure, and tiresome book I know. I shall admire if you have a clear conception about most of the persons and matters in his work; but, in fact, I do not believe you have. Pray, can you distinguish between his *cock* and *hen* Heghes, and between all Yasouses and Ozoros? and do you firmly believe that an old man and his son were sent for and put to death, because the King had run into a thorn-bush, and was forced to leave his clothes behind him! Is it your faith, that one of their Abyssinian Majesties pleaded not being able to contribute towards sending for a new Abuna, because he had spent all his money at Venice in looking-glasses? And do you really think that Peter Paez was a Jack-of-all-trades, and built palaces and convents without assistance, and furnished them with his own hands? You, who are a little apt to contest most assertions, must have strangely let out your credulity! I could put forty questions to you as wonderful; and, for my part, could as soon credit . . .[1]

I am tired of railing at French barbarity and folly. They are more puerile now serious, than when in the long paroxysm of gay levity. Legislators, a senate, to neglect laws, in order to annihilate coats of arms and liveries! to pull down a King, and set up an Emperor! They are hastening to establish the tribunal of the prætorian guards; for the sovereignty, it seems, is not to be hereditary. One view of their *fête* of the 14th[2], I suppose, is to draw money to Paris; and the consequence will be, that the deputies will return to the provinces drunk with independence and self-importance,

LETTER 2735.—[1] So in Lord Orford's *Works*, in which this letter was first printed.

[2] In commemoration of the capture of the Bastille.

and will commit fifty times more excesses, massacres, and devastations than last year. George Selwyn says that *Monsieur*, the King's brother, is the only man of rank from whom they cannot take a title.

How frantically have the French acted, and how rationally the Americans! But Franklin and Washington were great men. None have appeared yet in France; and Necker has only returned to make a wretched figure! He is become as insignificant as his King; his name is never mentioned, but now and then as disapproving something that is done. Why then does he stay? Does he wait to strike some great stroke, when everything is demolished? His glory, which consisted in being minister though a Protestant, is vanished by the destruction of Popery; the honour of which, I suppose, he will scarce assume to himself. I have vented my budget, and now good night! I feel almost as if I could walk up to bed.

2736. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, July 2, 1790.

I wrote a bit of a letter to you t'other day in such a hurry that I don't know what I said—though I fear more than I intended—but no more of that.

My neighbourhood, though Richmond is brimful both of French and English, furnishes no more entertainment than usual, for which I am much more sorry on your account than on my own, for my letters will not be amusing. My personal history is short and dull. I have made my chief visits; my offices advance, and I have got in most of my hay, and such a quantity, that I believe, I believe, it will pay for half a yard of my building. All news have centred in elections; I care about none, nor have listened to any. They and the pressgangs have swept the roads of footpads

Letter 2736.—Not in C.

and highwaymen, who hide themselves, or are gone to vote. Whether they who used to come to see my house are of either complexion, I don't know, but I have had less demand for tickets than usual—what else can I tell you?

I am glad you stayed long enough at Park Place to see all its beauties. The cottage and all its purlieus are delicious, so is the bridge and Isis, and the Druids' temple seems to have been born and bred on the spot where it stands. I wish you had seen Nuneham too, which is another of my first favourites.

Mr. Berry will want news of the Spanish war, but I can send him none, nor do I at all believe that it will come to a head. France seems more likely to ripen to confusion; they go on levelling so madly, that I shall wonder if everybody does not think himself loosened from all restraints and bound to conform to none. A pretty experiment to throw society, with all its improved vices and desires, into a state of nature, which in its outset had many of them to discover, and no worse instrument than the jawbone of an ass to execute mischief with. That Serene Prince the Duke of Orléans has bowed to the abolition of titles, and calls himself *Monsr. Capet*, from whom he may be descended, if he is not from the Bourbons; but as he has failed in being such another usurper, I wonder he did not avoid the allusion.

Since I began my letter I have called on Madame de Boufflers, and heard but too much news. Monsr. d'Olan[1], a worthy man, and nephew of my dear friend Madame du Deffand, has been taken out of his bed, to which he was confined by the gout, at Avignon, and hanged by the mob! I have said for this year that I am happy she is dead: and now how much that reflection is fortified! The Prime Minister of Spain has been stabbed by a Frenchman, but is not dead—the wretch is taken. I hope Mr. Berry will

[1] The Marquis d'Aulan.

cease to reckon me a royalist, because I do not think that liberty is cheaply purchased by murders and every kind of violence and injustice.

You must tack this half letter to that of t'other day, and call it a whole one. You are sure I must want matter, not inclination, when I do not send you what pedants call a just volume. Pray return from Lymington with blooming countenances; you must sit for your pictures before your long journey. I have not mentioned that article lately, because you have both looked so pale, nor indeed has the subject been so agreeable as when I first proposed it; portraits are but melancholy pleasures in long absences. With what a different emphasis does one say adieu! for a month, and for a year. I scarce guess how one can say the latter—alas! I must learn.

2737. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday night, July 3, 1790.

How kind to write the very moment you arrived! but pray do not think that, welcome as your letters are, I would purchase them at the price of any fatigue to you—a proviso I put in already against moments when you may be more weary than by a journey to Lymington. You make me happy by the good accounts of Miss Agnes; and I should be completely so, if the air of the sea could be so beneficial to you both, as to make your farther journey unnecessary to your healths, at least for some time; for—and I protest solemnly that not a personal thought enters into the consideration—I shall be excessively alarmed at your going to the Continent, when such a frenzy has seized it. You see by the papers that the flame has burst out at Florence: can Pisa then be secure? Flanders can be no safe road; and is any part of France so? I told you in my last of the

horrors at Avignon. At Madrid the people are riotous against the war with us, and prosecuted I am persuaded it will not be; but the demon of Gaul is busy everywhere—nay, its imps are here.

Horne Tooke declared on the hustings t'other day that he would exterminate those *locusts* the nobility. Lord Lansdowne, whose family name I suspect to have been *Petit* (a French one), not Petty, is suspected to have set Tooke at work, and, like Monsr. Capet[1], would waive his marquisate to compass a revolution. Capet is gone to the new St. Barthélemi or jubilee on the 14th. The banquet tables, it is said, are to extend a *ligue*, for *league* is not French enough; the King is to be declared Emperor of the Franks, but the dignity not to be hereditary, that Polish massacres may be so.

The *États*, who are as foolish as atrocious, have printed lists of the surnames which the late *noblesse* are to assume or resume; as if people did not know their own names. I like a speech I have heard of the Queen. She went with the King to see the manufacture of glass, and, as they passed the Halles, the *poissardes* huzzaed them: 'Upon my word,' said the Queen, 'these folks are civiller when you visit them, than when they visit you.' This marked both spirit and good humour. For my part, I am so shocked at French barbarity, that I begin to think that our hatred of them is not national prejudice but natural instinct; as tame animals are born with an antipathy to beasts of prey.

Mrs. Damer tells me in a letter to-day that Lady Aylesbury was charmed with you both (which did not surprise either of us); and says she never saw two persons have so much taste for the country, who have no place of their own. It may be so; but, begging her Ladyship's pardon and yours,

LETTER 2737.—[1] The Duc d'Orléans.

I think that people who have a place of their own are mighty apt not to like any other.

I feel all the kindness at your determination of coming to Twickenham in August, and shall certainly say no more against it, though I am certain that I shall count every day that passes; and when *they are passed*, they will leave a melancholy impression on Strawberry, that I had rather have affixed to London. The two last summers were infinitely the pleasantest I ever passed here, for I never before had an agreeable neighbourhood. Still I loved the place, and had no comparisons to draw. Now, the neighbourhood will remain, and will appear ten times worse; with the aggravation of remembering two months that may have some transient roses, but, I am sure, lasting thorns. You tell me I do not write with my usual spirits: at least I will suppress, as much as I can, the want of them, though I am a bad dissembler.

Miss Cambridge told me you had charged her to search for a house for you. I did bid Philip, but I believe not with the eagerness of last year, and I am persuaded she will execute your commission punctually.

You do not mention the cathedral at Winchester, which I have twice seen and admired; nor do you say anything of Bevismount and Netley—charming Netley! At Lyndhurst you passed the palatial hovel of my Royal nephew; who I have reason to wish had never been so, and did all I could to prevent his being.

The home chapter will be as dull as usual. The Boydels and Nichols breakfasted here yesterday, in return for their civilities at the Shakespeare Gallery. On Tuesday is to come Lady Herries and her clan. The week before last I met the Marlboroughs at Lady Di's. The Duchess desired to come and see Strawberry again, as it had rained the whole time she was here last. I proposed the next

morning: no, she could not; she expected company to dinner; she believed their brother, Lord Robert[2], would dine with them: I thought that a little odd, as they have just turned him out for Oxfordshire; and I thought a dinner no cause at the distance of four miles. In her Grace's dawdling way, she could fix no time: and so on Friday, at half an hour after seven, as I was going to Lady North's, they arrived; and the sun being setting, and the moon not risen, you may judge how much they could see through all the painted glass by twilight.

It has rained all day, and I have not been out of the house. In the morning I had three or four visitors, particularly my nephew George Cholmondeley, with an account of his marriage settlements[3] and the toothache. To-night I am writing to you comfortably by the fireside, for we are forced to raise an English July in a hot-house, like grapes. Pray tell me as much of your personal history and what company you have. I care much more about Lymington than all the elections in the kingdom, and I seem to think that you interest yourself as much about *les amusemens des eaux de Straberri.* Good night.

2738. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night, July 10, 1790.

I BEGIN my letter to-night, but shall not send it away till I hear again from you, that our letters may not jostle without answering one another; but how can I pass my solitary evenings so well as by talking to you? I laid on my couch for three days, but as never was so tractable a gout as mine, I have walked all over the house to-day

[2] Lord Robert Spencer.

[3] He married, on Aug. 7, Marcia, daughter of John Pitt, of Encombe, Dorsetshire.

LETTER 2738.—Not in C.

without assistance. I did long to peep at my building, but as it has been a cold *dog-day*, I would not risk a relapse, and about dinner we had a smart shower. 'Well,' you cry, 'and was it worth while to write only to tell me it is cold? We know that at Weymouth.' Oh yes! it was to tell you otherguess news than of heat or cold overhead. In short, as whatever may directly or indirectly affect you and your sister is my principal occupation at present, I must transcribe two paragraphs from *The Times* of the day before yesterday.

'The subjects of Leopold have assumed the cockade in *Leghorn*, and delivered to the Regency a *Bill of Rights*.'

'On the 31st of May, the people in a tumultuous manner broke open two churches at *Leghorn*. They then advanced to the quarter of the Jews, threatening entirely to extirpate them. Some soldiers were hastily assembled and ordered to fire on the mutineers. Six were killed and a great number wounded. Still however the disturbances continued. They have opened other churches, and converted them into magazines, and have assumed the red and white cockade. The senate and governor have endeavoured to persuade them to adopt peaceable measures. They have answered by a memorial, stating their civil and religious grievances and demanding redress.'

Thus Pisa, you see, is no sojourning place for you. Indeed, as I told Miss Agnes in my last, till some of the ferment in Europe subsides, it would be very unadvised to change this country for any other. Mrs. Boscawen, who came to visit my gout this morning, told me that Mr. Prescot, coming from Avignon, where poor Monsr. Dolan and four other persons have been hanged for refusing to disavow the Pope, was thrown into prison in France, and detained there all night, before [being] suffered to prosecute his journey through France. The Duchess of Gloucester,

who called on me afterwards, says the like troubles are broken out in Switzerland. Surely this is not a season for expeditions to the Continent.

Monsr. Capet has been twice at Brighthelmstone, and had sent Madame Buffon[1] before to feel his way. She and others have warned him not to embark; he has given it up, has sent for his pictures for sale, and perhaps with them may buy an Irish peerage. Lord Carlisle and Lord William Gordon were going to Paris for the 14th, but hear it would be too perilous a service—*il n'y feroit pas bon pour tout aristocrat!*

General Conway in his last letter asked me if it was not a theme to moralize on, this earthquake that has swallowed up all Montmorencis, Guises, Birons, and great names? I reply, it makes me *immoralize*; I am outrageous at the destruction of all the visions that make history delectable: without some romance it is but a register of crimes and calamities, and the French seem preparing to make their country one universal St. Barthélemi: they are instructing the populace to lay everything waste! What is to restrain them? Will they obey those masters who tell them, preach to them, that all are equal; but who, good men! pay themselves twelve livres a day for propagating that doctrine? I shall wonder if *their equals* do not recollect having an equal right to twelve livres a day! Oh, go not into that conflagration, nor whither its sparks extend! Come to the banks of the gentle placid Thames, nor strew its shores with alarm and anxiety by leaving them. How I wished for you to-day —yes, don't you believe me?—and particularly at three o'clock! Mrs. Boscawen was sitting with me here in the blue bow-window; in a moment the river was covered with little yatches and boats, the road and the opposite meadow with coaches, chaises, horsemen, women, and children.

[1] The Comtesse de Buffon, to whom the Duc d'Orléans was attached.

Mr. George Hardinge had given three guineas to be rowed for by four two-oared boats from his Ragman's Castle to Lady Dudley's and back, so we saw the confluence go and return. I had not heard of it, but all Richmond had, and was descended from its heights. Mrs. Boscawen says you have at Weymouth the Dowager Duchess Plantagenet[2], or, as I translate her, Broomstick; *beaucoup d'honneur*, but I don't believe she enlivens you like a boat-race. Adieu, *jusqu'au résumé.*

12th.

It is but Monday evening, and I expect no letter till to-morrow, but I must go on; I have new horrors and dangers to relate. Monsr. Cordon, who was Sardinian minister here, and now at Paris, fell under the displeasure of the new despots, the mob; they met a man whom they took for Cordon, and *sans dire gare!* hanged him. Madame de St. Alban[3], who you know is a pinchbeck-niece of mine, was returning to Lord Cholmondeley from Paris, but was arrested at the gate, and had all her papers seized and examined. While I was writing this paragraph, Mrs. Grenville called to see me, and had just seen a Mrs. Hamlyn, lately returned from Italy with her husband; between Boulogne and Calais they were stopped *seven times* by vagabonds liberty-drunk, and obliged to drink with them; and yesterday I heard of a Mr. Prescot being stopped in France and imprisoned for a night; but it is for Wednesday that everybody trembles. The son of Madame de Boufflers has written to his mother in a style of taking leave of her and his wife and child, as not knowing if he shall ever see them again. I do not coin these tragedies to frighten you, but they will terrify me if you still think of setting your foot on French ground.

[2] The Dowager Duchess of Beaufort.

[3] Formerly Mrs. Elliot, wife of a physician, from whom she eloped in 1774.

What say you to that mischievous lunatic Lord Stanhope, who is to celebrate the French jubilee at the Crown and Anchor? I was told to-day, but have not seen it, of an excellent advertisement against him from the oyster-women of Billingsgate, professing their *dis*loyalty, and desiring to be associated to his banquet.

I am still confined, and, like others who are well, sitting by the fire—in short, one must have fire-summer, if sun-summer is not to be had. Mrs. Anderson and Mr. Wheeler called on me this morning from Hampton; she looks lean and ill, and goes to Ramsgate; her parents next week to Tunbridge for a month. One would think all the English were ducks, they are for ever waddling to the water. But I must stop, I shall not have an inch of paper for to-morrow.

Tuesday.

It is past twelve and no post yet, and ours go away at one. Lady Valetort was brought to bed of a dead daughter yesterday, but Lady Mount-Edgcumbe is more likely to die of the miscarriage than she. Here is your letter, I do not like your resolution not being shaken. I will say no more, but that I have not invented one of the circumstances I have stated in this or my last. I am grieved that Miss Agnes does not advance. About me you may be quite easy; my lameness is no bigger than a limp. I only do not go out because I dread a relapse; and as I have company *quantum sufficit* in a morning, and can write to you all the evening, I do not mind voluntary confinement. It rains again this minute—cold rain. I am sorry your coast is as bad.

I have nothing to add to my letter but a new edition or correction of an old proverb, that I made this morning on Lady Cecilia's and everybody's jaunts to watering-places: *Home is never home, though ever so comely.* Mr. Udney[4] is just come

[4] John Udney, sometime Consul at Leghorn.

in, the post is just going out; I must finish abruptly—if my letters ever do finish.

2739. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, July 17, Saturday, 1790.

I have received yours of the 14th, and since you seem so determined on your journey, I shall say little more on the subject; though if my arguments have had no weight, yours, I assure you, are as far from convincing me. That Miss Crawford or Mrs. Lockart may have met with no disturbances on their routes is probably true, but proves nothing as to safety; nor, when there is so much danger, does it become a jot wiser to run the contrary risk. That our papers are very untrue is certain; but nothing on earth is less true than that they have exaggerated the barbarities in France—they have not specified an hundredth part of them! They have not mentioned a third part of the châteaus that have been burnt. Have they said a syllable of the murder of poor Monsr. Dolan, or of five nuns massacred there, or of a young man just going to be married to a pretty young woman with whom he was in love, and whom they hanged before her window? Will Miss Crawford deny these facts, or Mrs. Lockart deny the disturbances in Tuscany, of which I do know the government received an account? I have heard that they are pacified—so were the disturbances in Hungary said to be—but they have broken out again.

You need not have the most trifling apprehension of what I said I could not write. It is merely a project for suspending your journey till you see a little farther, and that you shall know when I see you.

It is said that an account has come in forty-eight hours

Letter 2739.—Not in C.

that everything of St. Barthélemi's jubilee passed tranquilly the first day, and I did suppose that the fears of the *États* would make them take all manner of precautions; but my notion all along has been that the greater danger of confusion will be when the deputies, double poisoned by the levellers, shall return into their several provinces. The Duke of Orléans, after much fluctuation, did go to Paris, and made a speech to the *États*, as you will see in our papers; but it is said to have been ill received. This is all I know *des parties d'outremer*. We seem to be very preparatory for war with Spain, but I still have no faith in its taking place.

Lord Camelford has at last heard of his son's [1] safety—and there ends all my knowledge.

My gout did not last so long as a common cold. I was at Hampton on Friday, and at Richmond last night, making visits, but found nobody at home; it was the first tolerable evening, and everybody had flown out. To-day it has been warmer, but as moist as if a sirocco.

Thus, you see, Lymington is not more eventless. The two male Edgcumbes and Mr. Williams were with me this morning, and the two Lysons's [2] dined with me, and General Conway breakfasted with me on Thursday morning on his way from town, so if there were a wherewithal of news, I might have learnt some.

To-morrow I go to London; on Tuesday to Mr. Barrett's in Kent; and on Friday I shall be here again.

My week of confined evenings has been employed in

[1] Hon. Thomas Pitt (1775–1804), succeeded his father as second Baron Camelford in 1793. He was killed in a duel with a former friend named Best. He entered the navy in 1789 on board the *Guardian*, commanded by Lieutenant Edward Riou. The ship was wrecked near the Cape of Good Hope. Pitt, with some others, remained on the ship, and succeeded in bringing her into Table Bay.

[2] The brother of the Rev. Daniel Lysons, Samuel Lysons (1763–1819), who was also an antiquary, was an occasional guest at Strawberry Hill.

writing notes to Mr. Pennant's *London*. Ever since the appearance of *Les Rues de Paris* I had been collecting notices for such a work, though probably now should not have executed it. When Mr. Pennant had something of such an idea the winter before last, I told him such hints as I recollected; but as he is more impetuous than digestive, I had not looked out my memorandums, and he has made such a bungling use of those I gave him (for instance, in calling the Duchess of Tirconnel *the white milliner* instead of *the white widow*), that I am glad I furnished him with no more.

What can I say more? Nothing to-night, but that both Philip and I have looked and inquired, and can find nothing here that even calls itself a ready-furnished house. I am persuaded, though Miss Cambridge did not tell you so, that she had inquired, and knows there is not one.

This being such a *chip in paper*, I will carry it with me to town to-morrow, and even keep it back till after Monday evening, when I may possibly be able to satisfy your curiosity about the *quiet peaceable French*, and their modest jubilee, in honour of their destroying tyranny and restoring liberty to everybody of hanging whom they please without trial.

Monday, 19th.

I came to town yesterday, and at the door my maid told me that two persons had called to inquire, who had heard that I was dangerously ill, and even supposed dead. To be sure at my age that would be no miracle; but as upon my honour I have seen myself every day, and know nothing of any illness I have had but a fillip of gout, I cannot believe there is any truth in those reports.

I supped at my sister's last night, with several Churchills, Miss Carter, and Mr. Fawkener, Clerk of the Council, and even he had only heard that the Wednesday you wot of

passed at Paris without disturbance. If I hear more of it this evening you shall know. I did hear a deal about Lord Barrymore and theatres he is building; and of Lord Salisbury's licence to O'Reilly for operas at the Pantheon, but caring nothing about those matters I did not listen.

To-night.—I have seen Madame de Villegagnon-Walpole and Madame de la Villebague this evening, and all they have heard yet is, that the Wednesday passed quietly, except that one cannon burst and killed five or six persons—but lives go for nothing upon good occasions. The King tramped on foot on the left hand of his superior the President of the Assembly; the Queen was so lucky as to be worse treated, and was not forced to be present! There, I think Miss Crawford cannot send you a more peaceable or a more inviting account. Oh yes! had you been at Lyons lately, you might have been obliged to receive most condescending civilities from two of the greatest personages in France. Lady Rivers has written to my sister that she was at Lyons when two Amazons arrived there, deputed by their legislative body, Mesdames les Poissardes, to invite the *late* Comtesse d'Artois to return to Paris; and those two ambassadresses lodged in the same hotel. Lady R. was told she ought to wait on them—not she indeed. 'Oh yes, you had much better'—and so she found she had. They received her very graciously, and said, 'Nous nous reverrons.' How could I imagine that it is not charming travelling through France! I go into Kent to-morrow; how will you envy me if I meet a detachment of *poissardes* on the road to Chevening to create Earl Stanhope no peer! Good night.

2740. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night, July 23, 1790.

I arrived at Lee on the day and hour I had promised Mr. Barrett; returned to town on the day and hour I had promised myself, and was back here as punctually in my promise to Strawberry. Nothing in this was extraordinary, as I have always had the felicity of knowing my own mind; but the marvel was, that I, who have not been farther than Park Place these four years, and am moreover four years older and have had half a dozen more fits of gout, was not at all fatigued by an hundred and twenty miles in three days, was new dressed by seven yesterday evening, went to Madame Walpole's, and then supped at Lady M. Churchill's. In short, I am so proud of all these feats of activity, that if you two should elope, I will say like portly Hal the moment he had beheaded Anne Boleyn,

> Cock's bones! now again I stand
> The jolliest batchelor i' th' land [1],

and I will marry two more wives the next day—so at your peril be it!

I found Mr. Barrett's house complete, and the most perfect thing ever formed! Such taste, every inch so well finished, and the drawing-room and eating-room so magnificent! I think if Strawberry were not its parent, it

Letter 2740.—Not in C.

[1] Horace Walpole quotes this sentence in his MS. notes on Archibald Robertson's *Topographical Survey of the Great Road from London to Bath* (1792). He supplements the author's account of Richmond Park as follows:—'Richmond or New Park was made or rather, I suppose, enlarged by Charles 1st, as on a small mount . . . on the western ridge near the lodge belonging to the Countess of Pembroke by a grant of George 3rd, tradition says Henry 8th waited for a signal from the Tower of London to notify to him the moment the Execution of Anne Boleyn should be completed, and that he uttered that brutal and sensual sentence,

"Cock's bones! now again I stand
The jolliest batchelor in the land."'

See also Prior's *Turtle and Sparrow*, ll. 271–2.

would be jealous. My journey, too, delighted me: such a face of plenty and beauty; the corn, the hay harvest, the cherry orchards, the hop grounds, all in their different ages so promising or so fulfilling! All the farms and hedges so tight and neat, and such rows of houses tacking themselves on to every town, that every five miles were an answer to Dr. Price and Lord Stanhope; and on t'other side what an answer is coming from France! But I must keep to a little regularity.

The day of the jubilee was a deluge, and, like Noah's flood and the *États*, almost swept away everything; it rained fourteen hours, and not a dry thread but on the Queen (who *was* there), and had an awning for her and a few ladies, behind the King. The rest you know—but now list! When Philippe d'Orléans waited on the still King, M. Gouvion [2] (second under La Fayette) jostled him, and said, 'If you do not resent this, you are a scoundrel'—*ce n'est pas tout*—five-and-twenty of the Garde Nationale have bound themselves to fight the aforesaid Philippe, provided that like a bowl he can tip down Gouvion and the first four-and-twenty. I left London on tiptoe for the event, and Mr. Lenox, I suppose, is not one of the least impatient.

The 27th is to be the octave to the 14th, and is expected to produce fearful events. On that day La Fayette's commission is to be renewed, or a successor appointed. But all this is nothing to an event that has happened, and the detail of which *I saw* last night in a letter to Madame Walpole from her sister at Paris, and which Mr. Fawkener had heard, though not quite so circumstantially.

On the 13th arrived at Paris fifteen hundred Bretons on foot, the commander alone mounted. They marched to

[2] General Jean-Baptiste Gouvion (1747–1792), second in command of the National Guard.

the *pont tournant* of the Tuileries. The Garde Nationale would have stopped them, and have obliged the commander to dismount—*point du tout.* They advanced into the garden under the windows of the King, who appeared in the balcony, and gracieused them. They demanded admission to him, and were admitted, when the commandant, bending one knee, laid his sword at the King's feet, and said, 'Sire, je suis chargé par la nation bretonne de venir jurer amour et fidélité à votre Majesté, et je verserai la dernière goutte de mon sang pour vous, pour la Reine et pour Monseigneur le Dauphin.' The King embraced him. The whole troop then went to a little garden parted off for the Dauphin on the terrace of the Tuileries, where he was gathering flowers. The pretty boy gave a flower as long as they lasted to every Breton, and then gathered lilac leaves, and for fear *they* should not last, tore them in two, and gave half a leaf apiece to the rest. And what, you will cry, were their Majesties the *États* doing all this time. Oh, I suppose they had more important business on their hands, and were consulting metaphysically where they should deposit that old rag the Oriflamme, for they are exceedingly attentive to making laws for types and symbols, and probably are as much afraid of the Bretons as they are of myladies the *poissardes*; but I do not add a tittle to my text, and thus leave these chapters in the middle.

Our papers say the Margrave of Anspach is dead suddenly [3] —so Lady Craven is widow, though still wife.

I went to carry my niece, Sophia Walpole, home last night from her mother's, and found Little Burlington Street blocked up by coaches. Lord Barrymore, his sister Lady Caroline [4], and Mrs. Goodall the actress, were per-

[3] This was not the case.

[4] Lady Caroline Barry, only daughter of sixth Earl of Barrymore; m. (1788) Louis Pierre Drummond, Comte de Melfort.

forming *The Beaux' Stratagem* in Squib's auction-room, which his Lordship has converted into a theatre. I do not know the rest of the company, nor are you probably curious. Having now emptied my pouch of news, I will come to your letter of the 20th, which I have received.

I thank you for saying at least that you will take time to consider before you finally determine on your journey. I do not promise myself much from that consideration, for if you *can* still hesitate, it must be by the *coup de baguette* of some guardian angel that the face of Europe can be tranquillized in two months. The position of France, indeed, may be much worse; but the talisman which I conclude you possess, and that is to convey you invulnerable or invisible through that nation of barbarians, must have as much virtue as it had a fortnight ago, and as I have no amulet that can lull asleep my fears for you, I am not at all comforted nor quieted by the composing draught you have sent me. Those alarms have set *me* on considering too, and unless you have reasons that are unknown to me, those you did give me appear by no means adequate to so strange a fancy as that of leaving your country again, when it is, and appears to everybody else, the only country in Europe at present that one would wish to be in. I fear my dread of letting my self-love preponderate over my attachment to dear you and dear Agnes made me too rashly forbear to contend against your scheme. I heartily repent of my acquiescence, which was as full of self-love as opposition would have been. In the cooler moments I have had since, it appears to me a wild, uncomfortable plan, that will not produce one of the purposes you seemed to propose by it, and therefore I ascribe it to a volatile roving humour, or to some motive of which I am ignorant, and into which I have no right to inquire.

Any amendment in your sister that you announce is

always the most grateful part of your letters, agreeable as they are to me. Dull they cannot be when one is so interested as I am. It is for your sake, not my own, that I wish you better amused. Of whom, were all the world at Lymington, could you talk, that would engage my attention so much as what you tell me about yourselves? Good night. Don't forget to tell me when I am to change my direction.

2741. To Miss Hannah More.

Strawberry Hill, July 25, 1790.

Oh yes, I will have the gout willingly (such a pigmy fit as my last, *s'entend*) if it will make you write to me, which you never do in cool blood. One must be found stark under a hedge or be sold for a slave, or be a cripple, to put you in mind of one. You have no feeling but in your virtues nor friendship upon a less occasion than one's being in danger of one's life. You would not give a straw for a friend upon whose misfortunes you could not go to heaven. How extremes meet! who would have thought you were so like to old Marlborough—'die and you'll adore one!' As you know I live to catch your rigid goodness tripping, I have found another resemblance for you; it is to Charles I. 'So earnest with your God[1]!' if you had not copied the Martyr, but had run out of church the instant you heard the bellman—but no, I cannot joke with you, when at my heart I pity you about the poor negro girl[2]—

Letter 2741.—Not in C.; presumably incomplete; reprinted from Messrs. Sotheby's Catalogue of July 14, 1896.

[1] From Waller's poem addressed *To Charles I on receiving at Chapel the News of the Duke of Buckingham's Death*:—

'So earnest with thy God, can no new care,
No sense of danger, interrupt thy pray'r?'

[2] 'I cannot forbear telling you, that at my city of Bristol, during church time, the congregations were surprised last Sunday with the bell

nay, you know I am forced to taunt your piety, your charity, your beneficence, your tender sensibilities, because I cannot find a mental infirmity about you—would the health of your person were as invulnerable! how unfortunate that you whose rest is broken in toiling to break the chains of the blacks, should have such a cruel instance come home to you—not to rouse your zeal; it never slumbers. Indeed I pity and feel for you.

My gout, thank you and Mrs. Boscawen too who was so kind as to visit it, lasted but five days, and left me so entirely, and so well, that I have since been beyond Canterbury (or should have received and answered your letter sooner) to visit my friend Mr. Barrett and his lovely house, which I recommend you to see the next time you go to Kent: it is the quintessence of Gothic taste exquisitely executed. I wish William of Wickham were alive to employ and reward Mr. Wyat—you would think the latter had designed the library for the former—it has sober dignity without prelatic pomp. I know a Protestant bishop whom a *good old Papist*[3] and I should like to see in just such a chamber at Canterbury, though I could almost wish your friend Bonner in that see when Dr. Price with Bonnerian fury is labouring to spread here the massacres excited and winked at by the National Assembly at Paris. I call their *fête* a new Barthélemi, and have no doubt but it will sluice equal torrents of blood, and probably terminate in worse despotism, for when liberty runs *mad* it always ends in her

of the public crier in the streets. . . . They found that the bellman was crying a reward of a guinea to anybody who would produce a poor negro girl who had run away. . . . To my great grief and indignation, the poor trembling wretch was dragged out from a hole in the top of a house where she had hid herself, and forced on board ship. Alas! I did not know it till too late, or I would have run the risk of buying her, and made you and the rest of my humane, I had almost said human, friends, help me out, if the cost had been considerable.' (Hannah More to Horace Walpole, July 1790.)

[3] Hannah More herself, who was on very friendly terms with the Bishop of London, here referred to by Walpole.

being blistered, blooded, and chained in a [strait] waistcoat.

Apropos of that pandemonium you will like a *bon mot* of la Signorina Piozzi; somebody was complaining of Sheridan's not having paid Rubinelli and Pacchierotti; she said he was like the Roman Emperor who lived upon the tongues of nightingales.

2742. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday, July 29, 1790.

If you give yourself an air and pretend to write dull letters, which I defy you to do when they are to pass through the medium of my eyes, I will lay you a wager that this shall beat you hollow, and even please Mr. Cumberland, who told me it was pity Mr. Gray's letters had been printed; and consequently, I suppose, poor gentleman! he thinks private letters ought to be as insipid as his own comedies. One comfort is, that if I have nothing to say, I trust it will be the last that you will receive till I see you, and therefore if it is as dull as the last scene in any comedy, no matter.

Yours of the 26th, that I have just received, tells me you will be in town by Thursday at farthest—so will I, certainly, and call on you in the evening. I have most seriously been house-hunting for you. I saw bills on two doors in Montpellier Row, but neither are furnished—and yesterday to a larger at Teddington, but it was not only stark naked, but tumbling down. You shall come to me, and then we will see what can be done.

I do hope you will be staggered about a longer journey for some time. But two days ago I saw a new paragraph of Tuscan disturbances. Every paper talks of horrid ones

Letter 2742.—Not in C.

at Lyons; but I will say no more now, as you promise to be guided by farther accounts.

I have learnt nothing fresher from Paris, only that all the letters talk of repeated insults to the Duke of Orléans, and it is thought he will return hither. Nor of the Bretons, *non plus.*

The Duchesse de Biron and the Boufflers's are to dine here on Saturday, and the Edgcumbes. The Duchess returns to Paris next week, but as she must leave her duchy behind, why should not Lord Abercorn desire the King to seize it as a wreck, and give it to Lady Cecilia Hamilton[1]?

The Argyles are returned, the Duchess, I hear, looking very ill. They have got a foolish notion at Richmond that Lord Blandford[2] is to marry Miss Gunning; an idea so improbable that even the luck of the Gunnings cannot make one believe it.

You are in the right to look better, and I would advise Agnes to do so too as fast as possible, for, to tell you the truth, I feel myself growing inconstant. I have seen Mrs. Udney. Oh, she is charming, looks so sensible, and, unluckily, so modest; but then, as Mr. Udney looks as old and decrepit as I do, there may be some hopes.

At night.

Mr. Lysons the divine and I have been this evening to see the late Duke of Montagu's at Richmond, where I had not been for many years. Formerly I was much there, but *her* Grace broke with me on what I said in my *Noble Authors*

[1] Eighth daughter of the Hon. and Rev. George Hamilton, fourth son of seventh Earl of Abercorn, and first cousin of the ninth Earl (afterwards first Marquis) of Abercorn, mentioned in the text. The Earl became much attached to her, and procured for her from the King the precedence of an Earl's daughter (Oct. 1789). On the death of his first wife (1791) he married Lady Cecil, but was divorced from her in 1798, when she married Sir Joseph Copley, Baronet.

[2] George Spencer (1766 – 1840), Marquis of Blandford, eldest son of fourth Duke of Marlborough, whom he succeeded in 1817.

of her grandfather Marlborough, as if I had been the first to propagate his avarice! I softened it in the second edition to please her, but not being the most placable of her soft sex, she never forgave it. The new garden that clambers up the hill is delightful, and disposed with admirable taste and variety. It is perfectly screened from human eyes, though in the bosom of so populous a village; and you climb till at last, treading the houses under foot, you recover the Thames and all the world at a little distance. I am amazed that it is not more talked of, and I am glad Mrs. Udney did not see me in my ascent or descent. I was no very graceful figure as Mr. Lysons was dragging me up and down. I will take care to make love on plain ground; and things do go on well, for at my return I found a note from Mrs. Udney to invite me to a concert on Sunday, so I must have made some impression, for I never saw her till yesterday morning.

While I write, Mr. Lysons has been turning over Le Neve's[3] *Monumenta Anglicana*, and has found that *nine* aldermen of London died in one year. I concluded it must have been in one of the years of the plague. No, it was in 1711. Then it certainly was in 1711 that turtles were first imported.

Adieu! How glad I am to have no more of these empty letters to write! Don't you think it tiresome to write letters at all? Pray let us have no more occasion to write any.

P.S. Mr. Lysons was last Monday at Mrs. Piozzi's *fête* at Streatham. Five-and-forty persons sat down to dinner. In the evening was a concert, and a little hopping, and a supper.

[3] John Le Neve (1679–1741), antiquary, compiler of the *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*.

2743. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Monday night, Aug. 2, 1790.

By yours of Friday, which I received yesterday, I find you got one from me on Wednesday, and I hope one on Friday too.

I shall certainly see you in Somerset Street on Thursday evening. I have changed my language, not my wishes; and scarce a morsel of my opinion about your going abroad, though, as I have told you, I did at first acquiesce, because I knew how much my own happiness was at stake, and I would not suffer that to preponderate with me. But oh, my beloved friend, can I be so interested about you and not be alarmed? Every day I hear new causes of terror. Lyons is all tumult and violence. The Duke of Argyle, who is just arrived, had his chaise pelted, and the coronet over his arms rubbed out. Miss Cheap, whom I met last night at a concert at Mrs. Udney's, is frightened for you, like me, and very sorry for your project. She told me she has just received a letter from an English family abroad, whom probably you know, who are longing to come home, but dare not venture. Are these vain terrors in me? And though I did not remonstrate at first, can I love you and be silent now?

Though I cannot yet believe it will be, there is certainly much more probability than I thought of another Gunning becoming a duchess. General Conway wrote to me that it is all settled, and that she is to have the same jointure as the Duchess of Marlborough; but *Lady Clackmannan*[1], who has questioned (you may be sure) both the Duke and Lord Lorne[2], says the former answered coolly, 'They tell

Letter 2743.—Not in C.

[1] A nickname for some lady of Horace Walpole's circle — possibly Lady Greenwich, who was a Campbell, and a great talker and gossip.

[2] George William Campbell (1768–

me it is to be,' but the other told her he knew nothing of the matter, and that he had even not seen Lord Blandford. The Duchess of Gloucester says that Mrs. Howe, who is apt to be well informed, does not believe it. My incredulity is still better founded, and hangs on the Duchess of Marlborough's wavering weathercockhood, which always rests at forbidding the banns.

My dinner for the Biron and Boufflers went off agreeably. Yesterday I had Mr. Thomas Walpole, his French wife, who is most amiable, and his sister and daughters, and that too passed well. The Bretons, who are *party per pale*, loyal and levellers, have promised the Seigneur de Chilly to burn his château at their return, if they find a soupçon of any seigneurial marks remaining. They joined in the jubilee with alacrity, and yet since have quelled a mob who were proceeding to great lengths against *le Capet* for not taking the oath on the altar. The Queen they call nothing but *la Dame Capet*, as in the Fronde Anne of Austria was *Dame Anne*.

It has rained all day. I had ordered my coach to go to Richmond in the evening, but bade it set up again, and preferred having the fires lighted, and writing to you comfortably.

Miss Cheap is certainly your true friend, for she told me that Mrs. Udney, whom I took for two-and-twenty, is eight-and-thirty. There I found the Abbé [3] singing glees with the Abrahams [4]. He came to Mr. Barrett's a day later than he had promised. I insisted that he had been warbling at the Worcester and Gloucester music meeting.

My nephew, George Cholmondeley, is to be married on Saturday. As Madame de St. Alban is breeding, I told him I hoped his cousin the Earl will not disinherit him for a ready-

1839), Marquis of Lorne, eldest son of sixth Duke of Argyll, whom he succeeded in 1806.

[3] The Rev. Norton Nicholls.

[4] The Misses Abrams, concert singers.

made heir. I would allow her to be a duchess, but then it should be without changing *her name.* Good night! I am glad I shall say so in person on Thursday.

2744. To the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 9, at night [1790].

Mr. Nicholls has offered to be postman to you; *whereof,* though I have nothing, or as little as nothing, to say, I thought *as how* it would look kinder to send nothing in writing than by word of mouth.

Nothing the first. So the Peace is made, and the stocks drank its health in a bumper; but when they waked the next morning, they found they had reckoned without their host, and that their Majesties the King of big Britain and the King of little Spain have agreed to make peace some time or other, if they can agree upon it: and so the stocks drew in their horns: but, having great trust in some time or other, they only fell two pegs lower. I, who never believed there would be war, kept my prophetic stocks up to par, and my consol—ation still higher; for when Spanish pride truckles, and English pride has had the honour of bullying, I dare to say we shall be content with the ostensible triumph, as Spain will be with some secret article that will leave her much where she was before.—Vide Falkland's Island [1].

Nothing the second. Miss Gunning's match with Lord Blandford. You asserted it so peremptorily, that, though I doubted it, I quoted you. Lo! it took its rise solely in poor old Bedford's dotage, that still harps on conjunctions copulative, but now disavows it, as they say, on a remonstrance from her daughter [2].

Letter 2744.—[1] See vol. vii. p. 411, note 1.
[2] The Duchess of Marlborough, mother of Lord Blandford.

Nothing the third. Nothing will come of nothing, says King Lear, and your humble servant,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2745. To the Earl of Strafford.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 12, 1790.

I MUST not pretend any longer, my dear Lord, that this region is void of news and diversions. Oh, we can innovate as well as neighbouring nations. If an Earl Stanhope, though he cannot be a tribune, is ambitious of being a plebeian, he may without a law be as vulgar as heart can wish; and, though we have not a National Assembly to lay the axe to the root of nobility, the peerage have got a precedent for laying themselves in the kennel. Last night the Earl of Barrymore was so humble as to perform a buffoon-dance and act Scaramouch in a pantomime at Richmond for the benefit of Edwin, jun., the comedian: and I, like an old fool, but calling myself a philosopher that loves to study human nature in all its disguises, went to see the performance.

Mr. Gray thinks that some Milton or some Cromwell may be lost to the world under the garb of a ploughman. Others may suppose that some excellent jack-pudding may lie hidden under red velvet and ermine. I cannot say that by the experiment of last night the latter hypothesis has been demonstrated, any more than the inverse proposition in France, where, though there seem to be many as bloody-minded rascals as Cromwell, I can discover none of his abilities. They have settled nothing like a constitution; on the contrary, they seem to protract everything but violence, as much as they can, in order to keep their louis a day, which is more than two-thirds of the Assembly perhaps ever saw in a month. I do not love legislators

that pay themselves so amply! They might have had as good a constitution as twenty-four millions of people could comport. As they have voted an army of an hundred and fifty thousand men, I know what their constitution will be, after passing through a civil war. In short, I detest them: they have done irreparable injury to liberty, for no monarch will ever summon *États* again; and all the real service that will result from their fury will be that every King in Europe, for these twenty or perhaps thirty years to come, will be content with the prerogative he has, without venturing to augment it.

The Empress of Russia has thrashed the King of Sweden; and the King of Sweden has thrashed the Empress of Russia. I am more glad that both are beaten than that either is victorious; for I do not, like our newspapers, and such admirers, fall in love with heroes and heroines who make war without a glimpse of provocation. I do like *our* making peace, whether we have provocation or not. I am forced to deal in European news, my dear Lord, for I have no homespun. I don't think my whole inkhorn could invent another paragraph; and therefore I will take my leave, with (your Lordship knows) every kind wish for your health and happiness.

Your most devoted humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

2746. To Mrs. Dickenson.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 25, 1790.

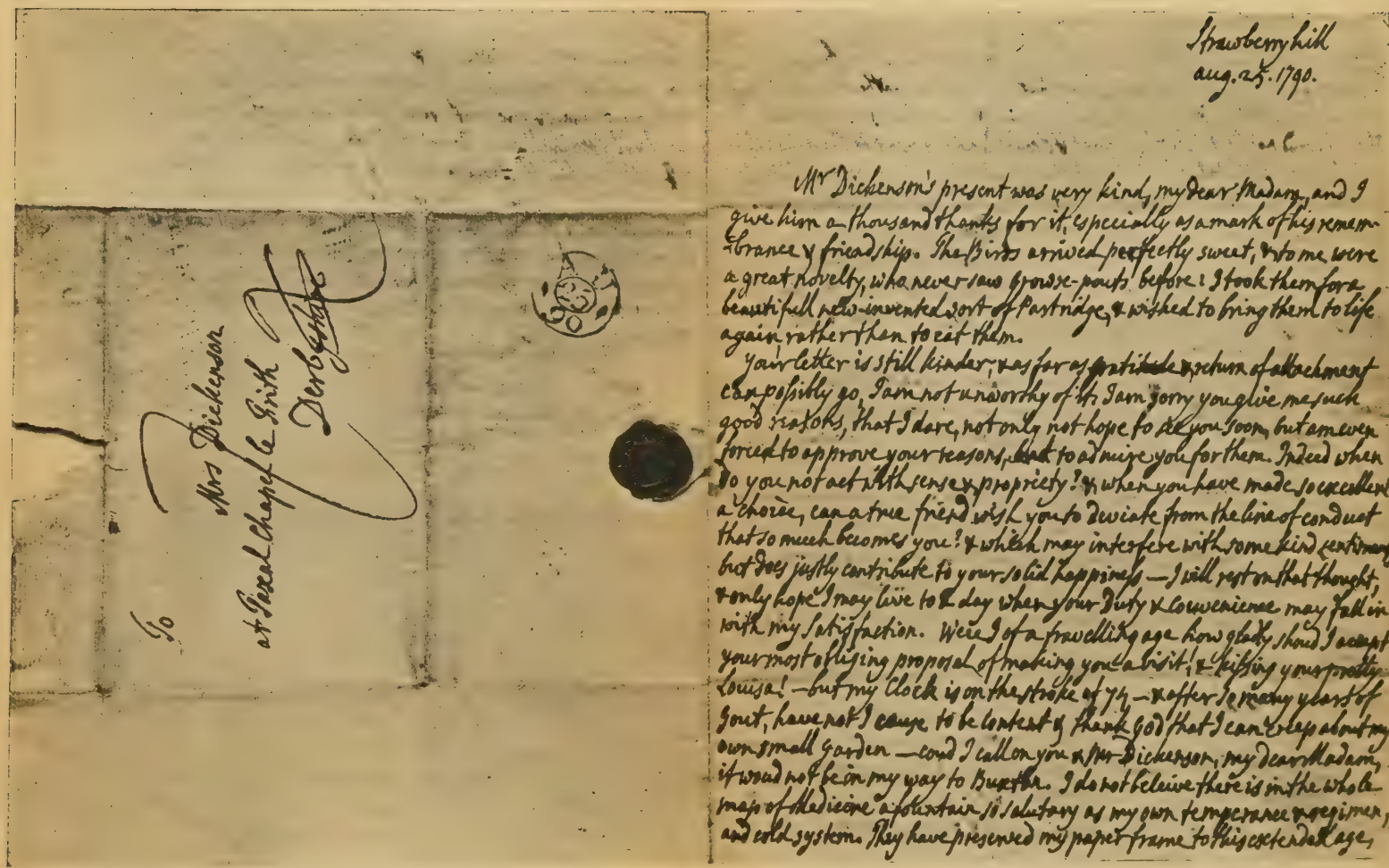
Mr. Dickenson's present was very kind, my dear Madam, and I give him a thousand thanks for it, especially as

Letter 2746. — Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Sir W. R. Anson, Baronet, M.P., Warden of All Souls College, Oxford.

a mark of his remembrance and friendship. The birds arrived perfectly sweet, and to me were a great novelty, who never saw grouse-pouts before: I took them for a beautiful new-invented sort of partridge, and wished to bring them to life again, rather than to eat them.

Your letter is still kinder, and as far as gratitude and return of attachment can possibly go, I am not unworthy of it. I am sorry you give me such good reasons, that I dare not only not hope to see you soon, but am even forced to approve your reasons, and to admire you for them. Indeed when do you not act with sense and propriety? and when you have made so excellent a choice, can a true friend wish you to deviate from the line of conduct that so much becomes you? and which may interfere with some kind sentiments but does justly contribute to your solid happiness—I will rest on that thought, and only hope I may live to a day when your duty and convenience may fall in with my satisfaction. Were I of a travelling age how gladly should I accept your most obliging proposal of making you a visit! and kissing your pretty Louisa[1]!—but my clock is on the stroke of seventy-four—and after so many years of gout, have not I cause to be content and thank God that I can creep about my own small garden?—could I call on you and Mr. Dickenson, my dear Madam, it would not be in my way to Buxton. I do not believe there is in the whole map of medicine a fountain so salutary as my own temperance and regimen, and cold system. They have preserved my paper frame to this extended age, I am certainly better than I was three years ago, and though I have frequent parentheses of gout, they are not only short, but in a manner without pain, so that the worst hurt they do me is to confine me—and that now is a small evil. In short, I would not be cured of *my* gout, if I could; I do

[1] Only child of Mrs. Dickenson, and afterwards married to General Anson.



To
Mrs Dickenson
at Pascal Chapel le Frith
Derbyshire

Strawberry hill
aug. 25. 1790.

Mr Dickenson's present was very kind, my dear Madam, and I give him a thousand thanks for it, especially as a mark of his remembrance & friendship. The Birds arrived perfectly sweet, & to me were a great novelty, who never saw grouse-pouts before: I took them for a beautifull new-invented sort of Partridge, & wished to bring them to life again rather than to eat them.

Your letter is still kinder, & as far as gratitude & return of attachment can possibly go, I am not unworthy of it. I am sorry you give me such good reasons, that I dare, not only not hope to see you soon, but am even forced to approve your reasons, but to admire you for them. Indeed when do you not act with sense & propriety? & when you have made so excellent a choice, can a true friend wish you to deviate from the line of conduct that so much becomes you? & which may interfere with some kind sentiments but does justly contribute to your solid happiness — I will rest on that thought, & only hope I may live to 2 day when your Duty & Convenience may fall in with my Satisfaction. Were I of a travelling age how gladly shoud I accept your most obliging proposal of making you a visit! & kissing your pretty Louisa! — but my Clock is on the stroke of 74 — & after so many years of Gout, have not I cause to be content & thank God that I can creep about my own small Garden — coud I call on you & Mr Dickenson, my dear Madam, it woud not be in my way to Buxton. I do not beleive there is in the whole map of Medicine a fountain so salutary as my own temperance & regimen, and cold system. They have preserved my paper frame to this extended age,

LETTER OF HORACE WALPOLE TO MRS. DICKENSON

I am certainly better than I was three years ago, & tho I have frequent returnes of gout, they are not only short, but in a manner without pain, so that the worst hurt they do me is to confine me — & that now is a small evil. In short I would not be cured of my gout if I could; I do not want to dance like Lord Barrymore with Delpini — nay, I should probably have some other illness, which I should understand so well how to manage — & besides old people who have no complaint, are mightapt to think that if forty or fifty years have not tamed them, they have remained at a stand & are still twenty — mercy on us! do but think what follies are committed by ancient gentry, that fancy themselves young! — but I talked too many lines on myself, & will now answer your questions.

Poor dear Mrs Vesey is exactly in the same state of childhood she was, & certainly will never be less so. One can only wish now that she was restored to happiness thro the only door by which she can pass to it, & which her blameless benevolent life makes us presume she will enjoy.

Miss Garrick I believe is still at Bristol, whither she went in a fright at the beginning of the Summer. In the single letter I have received from Miss Shore, she told me her friend was better. So is she herself, & tormenting herself more to mend her spotless soul than her constitution — one of her most seems indeed is an excellent one, which is always labouring to do good to others.

Miss Boyle, called fortune of five thousand a year, is really mistress of half of it. The other half is contested by Lord Shannon by some informality in the poor Brother's Will, or by Mrs Walsingham's presuming on her own title to it without the right. I have heard both causes assigned & know not which is the true. Miss Boyle is intoxicated with her release, & laughs & talks & gallops & drives & dances from night to morning & from one of the Isles to t'other — yet to the last moment of her mother's life never relaxed one moment in attention, & since, with all her torrent of spirits, has done nothing to be blamed, & behaves with great regard & propriety to all her mother's old friends. Both her real & nominal fortune have a cohort of suitors, but I hear of no preference; she throws, & has she had the keys, against her mother's advice, to admit no female to live with her (who would soon recommend a male) I hope she will not fling away her self & her liberty & felicity on one of our sex, without knowing whether he deserves her or not: for that rabble clan, the Dickensons, are not fortune-hunters.

Our early post allows me to say no more, tho I own I was happy to seize this moment of conversing with you again, for I am with the most sincere & cordial regard and esteem

My dear Madam

yr most obliged
& devoted Humble & best
Horace Walpole

not want to dance like Lord Barrymore with Delpini[2]—nay, I should probably have some other illness, which I should not understand so well how to manage—and besides old people who have no complaint are mighty apt to think that if forty or fifty years have not lamed them, they have remained at a stand, and are still twenty—mercy on us! do but think what follies are committed by ancient gentry that fancy themselves young!—but I have talked too many lines on myself, and will now answer your questions.

Poor dear Mrs. Vesey is exactly in the same state of childhood she was, and certainly will never be less so. One can only wish now that she was restored to happiness through the only door by which she can pass to it, and which her blameless benevolent life makes us presume she will enjoy.

Mrs. Garrick I believe is still at Bristol, whither she went in a fright at the beginning of the summer. In the single letter I have received from Miss More, she told me her friend was better. So is she herself, and tormenting herself, more to mend her spotless soul than her constitution—one of her nostrums indeed is an excellent one, which is always labouring to do good to others.

Miss Boyle[3], called a fortune of five thousand a year, is really mistress of half of it. The other half is contested by Lord Shannon[4] by some informality in the poor brother's[5] will, or by Mrs. Walsingham's presuming on her own title to it without the right. I have heard both causes assigned and know not which is the true. Miss Boyle is intoxicated with her release, and laughs and talks and gallops and drives and dances from night to morning, and from one end of the isle to t'other—yet to the last

[2] Formerly clown at Covent Garden Theatre.

[3] Miss Boyle-Walsingham, whose mother had recently died.

[4] Richard Boyle (1728–1807), third Earl of Shannon, Miss Boyle's uncle.

[5] Richard Boyle-Walsingham; d. 1788.

moment of her mother's life never relaxed one moment in attention; and since, with all her torrent of spirits, has done nothing to be blamed, and behaves with great regard and propriety to all her mother's old friends. Both her real and nominal fortune have a cohort of suitors, but I hear of no preference she shows; and as she has had the sense, against her mother's advice, to admit no female to live with her (who would soon recommend a male) I hope she will not fling away herself and her liberty and felicity on one of our sex, without knowing whether he deserves her or not; for that rare clan, the Dickensons, are not fortune-hunters.

Our early post allows me to say no more, though I own I was happy to seize this moment of conversing with you again, for I am with the most sincere and cordial regard and esteem,

My dearest Madam,
Your most obliged and *devoted* humble servant,
Hor. Walpole.

2747. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Aug. 30, 1790.

To be sure, I am glad you have been delighted with your travels; but Lord! Madam, how could you think (perhaps you did not think) of being pleased with beauties and prospects at home? Mr. Gilpin has more taste; he despised the richness, verdure, amenity of Richmond Hill, when he had seen rocks and lakes in the north; for size and distance of place add wonderfully to loveliness. From your first letter, I had more hopes of you: you were shocked at the rude mechanics, who thrust their callous hands into Dame Nature's bosom, and tear away all her dugs to get at her iron ribs, for the vile purposes of com-

merce and luxury; but you have relapsed, and are enchanted with Wales, and Chirk Castle, and twenty baubles, that everybody may visit in a week's time, without risk, and without the chance of a single hyæna running against your leg, as you went to your lodging at night. Can you boast of having discovered the source of the Dee or the Severn, which was not achieved by all antiquity, nor can be paralleled by all posterity, though the inhabitants of all the Welsh counties, that is the Gallà, have, or may have, seen those sources every day since the beginning of time? I will say no more on that subject, Madam, though I could write five volumes in quarto to show, by precedent, that you ought first to have gone to Dover Castle or Fountains Abbey, however far out of your way, and though you could have said nothing new about them; and to have given an account of the trade of the Irish Channel, before you sought any river on this side of it.

I firmly believe all the beauties of Wales, and regret having never seen them while I was able, especially Picton Castle, the seat of my maternal ancestry, from a window of which one of my grandsires, Sir Richard Phillips, who was no taller than I am broad, was dragged and made prisoner by a colonel of the Republicans, while parleying about a surrender, when besieged by them.

Of the charms of Chirk Castle I never heard before; but how few have eyes! and till somebody has, the rest only look, till they have been taught to see, by hearing others have seen. Of Nuneham, I doubt, you were not half so fond as I am. It is not superb, but so calm, *riant*, and comfortable, so live-at-able, one wakes in a morning on such a whole picture of beauty!

Your Ladyship's story of Mrs. Hodges rousing Lady Ravensworth at midnight, to borrow a pack of cards, reminds me of the Duke of Wharton, who knocked up his

guardian, whom he hated, in the middle of the night, to borrow a pin; but, pray, does she *order* supper for *six* at Lady Ravensworth's too?

To Lady *Ambrosia* Sydney[1] I am an utter stranger; I suppose she was not Sir Henry, but Sir *Nectar* Sydney's daughter.

I am as little acquainted with Miss Ponsonby and Miss Buttershaw[2]; I think I saw something in a newspaper about them, but I mind so little what I read there, that it made no impression, nor did I recollect to inquire; so your Ladyship has told me more than I can possibly tell you of them. Are they relations of her you call the *beautiful* Countess Talbot[3]?

Poor St. Winifrede and poor Wynnstay! *sic transit gloria mundi,* and of those who never were *in mundo.* Who is it says, that crowned heads and cane heads must equally come to the ground? Sir Watkyn's father was called Prince of Wales: the head of its last sovereign did not come to the ground, but was fixed on the rails of the Tower—the present era is preaching moral lessons to all of the

LETTER 2747.—[1] Ambrozia, third daughter of Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy of Ireland. She died unmarried.

[2] Walpole probably means Lady Eleanor Butler (d. 1829), sister of seventeenth Earl of Ormonde, who, with Miss Sarah Ponsonby, 'retired' from the world between 1774 and 1779. They settled at Plasnewydd in the Vale of Llangollen. Their retirement was retirement in name only, for they were constantly visited by tourists, including many foreigners. Lady Louisa Stuart writes of the 'Ladies of Llangollen' to Miss Clinton on Oct. 8, 1821 (*Letters*, ed. by Hon. J. A. Home, 1901, pp. 187–8):—'They are the very grossest flatterers and palaverers upon earth, and keeping... *a gossip shop* between England and Ireland, have contrived to learn the characters and private history, the foibles and predilections, of almost every individual above a cobbler in both, therefore know exactly in what key they should play to every fresh visitor. In the year of our Lord 1782, when I first heard of them, I was disposed to be captivated with anything so romantic. I came to my senses on being assured in course of time that there was nothing the least romantic about them, and that nobody knew the world so well, or was so desirous to keep up a close connection with it.'

[3] Lady Charlotte Hill (d. 1804), third daughter of first Marquis of Downshire; m. (1776) Hon. John Chetwynd Talbot, who succeeded his uncle as third Baron Talbot in 1782, and was cr. Earl Talbot in that year.

calling, and St. Winifrede is lucky to be out of danger—'tis well for her she is not at Avignon! There are fresh horrors from that neighbourhood; and Paris is in such a ferment that new swarms of French are flocking hither; but I have been so ample in my answer to your Ladyship's two entertaining letters, that I have not left myself an inch of paper to say more. Oh, here is half of my paper that I thought filled, untouched! I perceive I had folded it back as soon as I had written the first page; and as I wrote my letter late at night to be ready for our early post next morning, I was half asleep, and dreamt I had scribbled the whole sheet. Well, Madam, all the mishap will be, that you will have my news as dry as a chip before you receive it.

At Marseilles—I think it was at Marseilles—a Monsieur Cazalet, and of his name I am not sure, to secure himself (being known, I suppose, for no friend to the chaos), had just taken the civic oath, and thereupon had been invited to dine with the *maire*! On a sudden they heard a violent clamour in the street, and, opening the widow, beheld a furious mob, who being asked what they wanted, answered, 'The head of Cazalet.' On that he was concealed; but the savages broke in, found him, dragged him downstairs by his hair, and then by one leg through the streets, till he lost his senses, when, putting a rope round his neck, they were going to dispatch him; but two grenadiers, shocked at such barbarities, drew their sabres, rescued the sufferer, kept off the ruffians, and conveyed the poor martyr into a house: but he expired the moment he arrived!

At Paris, I have told you, Madam, confusion increases. A formal denunciation has been made to the domineering tribunal against Necker, who is accused of having advanced a million of livres to La Fayette, for the purpose of exciting or promoting the revolt in Brabant—how justly I know

not; but when anarchy is abroad, its centurions are not a whit more safe than their antagonists. There is a sentence in Juvenal that Lord Ossory will translate, that comprises the whole code of such times,

——*Verso pollice vulgi*
Quemlibet occidunt populariter.

What a nation are the French! Sometimes carrying slavery to idolatry of their tyrants; sometimes gorging their native insolence with all the extravagance of cruelty!

2748. To Miss Hannah More.

Sept. 11, 1790.

I have been lamenting that you never come eastward but to be planted like a weeping willow on the banks of the Thames[1] in the depth of winter, which too evidently does not agree with you, and which consequently you do not become, though you droop most willowly. It is therefore her (Mrs. Boscawen) desire and my wish that instead of sitting down by the waters of Babylon and coughing, you would suffer yourself to be transplanted from Cowslip Green to Rosedale[2] in October, where you will be as comfortable as in a hot-house, and see Christians; and in a bright morning may stroll out and make rhymes, if you list, to Thomson's blank Seasons, and where, though in the purlieus of royalty, you may now and then poach a miserable object to feed or be fed by your darling gluttony, charity. I am commissioned by the above-named dame to give you this invitation. Mrs. Garrick will not go once more or less to and from London—and cannot have a syllable new

Letter 2748. — Not in C.; presumably incomplete. Reprinted from Messrs. Sotheby's Catalogue of July 14, 1896.

[1] For several years Hannah More spent part of the winter at Hampton with Mrs. Garrick.

[2] Mrs. Boscawen's house at Richmond.

to tell you of the stage coaches and their returns; and you may do nothing once a week as well in one place as another. . . . Mrs. Boscawen's invitation is a fair handle; come try it, you are a pretty positive gentlewoman, though you only smile when persuaded to change your ways.

2749. To Lord Hailes.

Strawberry Hill, Sept. 21, 1790.

So many years, Sir, have elapsed since I saw Burleigh, that I cannot in general pretend to recollect the pictures well. I do remember that there was a surfeit of pieces by Luca Giordano and Carlo Dolce, no capital masters, and posterior to the excellent. *The* Earl of Exeter[1], who resided long at Rome in the time of those two painters, seemed to have employed them entirely during his sojourn there. I was not struck more than you, Sir, with the celebrated 'Death of Seneca,' though one of the best works of Jordano. Perhaps Prior's verses lifted it to part of its fame, though even those verses are inferior to many of that charming poet's compositions. Upon the whole, Burleigh is a noble palace, contains many fine things, and the inside court struck me with admiration and reverence.

The Shakespeare Gallery is truly most inadequate to its prototypes; but how should it be worthy of them! If we could recall the brightest luminaries of painting, could they do justice to Shakespeare? Was Raphael himself as great a genius in his art as the author of *Macbeth*? and who could draw Falstaff, but the writer of Falstaff? I am entirely of your opinion, Sir, that two of Northcote's pictures, from *King John* and *Richard the Third*, are at the head of the collection. In Macklin's Gallery of Poets and Scripture, there are much better pictures than at Boydell's.

Letter 2749.—[1] Probably John Cecil (d. 1700), fifth Earl of Exeter.

Opie's 'Jephthah's Vow' is a truly fine performance, and would be so in any assemblage of paintings; as Sir Joshua's 'Death of Beaufort' is worthy of none: the imp is burlesque, and the Cardinal seems terrified at him as before him, when the imp is behind him. In Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition there is a print that gives the fact simply, pathetically, and with dignity, and just as you wish it told.

My sentiments on French politics concur as much with yours as they do on the subjects above. The National Assembly set out too absurdly and extravagantly, not to throw their country into the last confusion; which is not the way of correcting a government, but more probably of producing a worse, bad as the old was, and thence they will have given a lasting wound to liberty: for what king will ever call *États* again, if he can possibly help it? The new legislators were pedants, not politicians, when they announced the equality of all men. We are all born so, no doubt, abstractedly; and physically capable of being kept so, were it possible to establish a perfect government, and give the same education to all men. But are they so in the present constitution of society, under a bad government, where most have had no education at all, but have been debased, brutified, by a long train and mixture of superstition and oppression, and witnesses to the luxury and vices of their superiors, which they could only envy and not enjoy? It was turning tigers loose; and the degradation of the nobility pointed out the prey. Could it be expected that savages so hallooed on to outrage, and void of any notions of reciprocal duties and obligations, would fall into a regular system of acting as citizens under the government of reason and justice? It was tearing all the bonds of society, which the experience of mankind had taught them were necessary to the mutual convenience of all; and no provision, no security, was made for those who

were levelled, and who, though they enjoyed what they had by the old constitution, were treated, or were exposed to be treated, as criminals. They have been treated so: several have been butchered; and the National Assembly dare not avenge them, as they should lose the favour of the intoxicated populace. That conduct was senseless, or worse. With no less folly did they seem to expect that a vast body of men, more enlightened, at least, than the gross multitude, would sit down in patience under persecution and deprivation of all they valued; I mean the nobility and clergy, who might be stunned, but were sure of reviving and of burning with vengeance. The insult was the greater, as the subsequent conduct of the National Assembly has proved more shamefully dishonest, in their paying themselves daily more than two-thirds of them ever saw perhaps in a month; and that flagitious self-bestowed stipend, as it is void of all patriotic integrity, will destroy their power too; for, if constitution-making is so lucrative a trade, others will wish to share in the plunder of their country too; and, even without a civil war, I am persuaded the present Assembly will neither be septennial, nor even triennial.

2750. To Miss Mary Berry.

Sunday, Oct. 10, 1790. The day of your departure.

Is it possible to write to my beloved friends, and refrain from speaking of my grief for losing you; though it is but the continuation of what I have felt ever since I was stunned by your intention of going abroad this autumn? Still I will not tire you with it often. In happy days I smiled, and called you *my dear wives*: *now* I can only think on you as *darling children* of whom I am bereaved! As such I have loved and do love you; and, charming as you both are, I have had no occasion to remind myself that

I am past seventy-three. Your hearts, your understandings, your virtues, and the cruel injustice of your fate, have interested me in everything that concerns you; and so far from having occasion to blush for any unbecoming weakness, I am proud of my affection for you, and very proud of your condescending to pass so many hours with a very old man, when everybody admires you, and the most insensible allow that your good sense and information (I speak of both) have formed you to converse with the most intelligent of our sex as well as your own; and neither can tax you with airs of pretension or affectation. Your simplicity and natural ease set off all your other merits—all these graces are lost to me, alas! when I have no time to lose.

Sensible as I am to my loss, it will occupy but part of my thoughts, till I know you safely landed, and arrived safely at Turin. Not till you are there, and I learn so, will my anxiety subside and settle into steady, selfish sorrow. I looked at every weathercock as I came along the road to-day, and was happy to see every one point north-east. May they do so to-morrow!

I found here the frame for Wolsey[1], and to-morrow morning Kirgate will place him in it; and then I shall begin pulling the little parlour to pieces, that it may be hung anew to receive him. I have also obeyed Miss Agnes, though with regret; for, on trying it, I found her 'Arcadia' would fit the place of the picture she condemns, which shall therefore be hung in its room; though the latter should give way to nothing else, nor shall be laid aside, but shall hang where I shall see it almost as often. I long to hear that its dear paintress is well; I thought her not at all so last night. You will tell me the truth, though she in

LETTER 2750. —[1] The 'Death of Wolsey,' copied by Agnes Berry from the original by William Lock, an amateur artist. 'Arcadia' was also by Agnes Berry.

her own case, and in that alone, allows herself mental reservation.

Forgive me for writing nothing to-night but about you two and myself. Of what can I have thought else? I have not spoken to a single person but my own servants since we parted last night. I found a message here from Miss Howe to invite me for this evening—do you think I have not preferred staying at home to write to you, as this must go to London to-morrow morning by the coach to be ready for Tuesday's post? My future letters shall talk of other things, whenever I know anything worth repeating; or perhaps any trifle, for I am determined to forbid myself lamentations that would weary you; and the frequency of my letters will prove there is no forgetfulness. If I live to see you again, you will then judge whether I am changed; but a friendship so rational and so pure as mine is, and so equal for both, is not likely to have any of the fickleness of youth, when it has none of its other ingredients. It was a sweet consolation to the short time that I may have left to fall into such a society; no wonder then that I am unhappy at that consolation being abridged. I pique myself on no philosophy, but what a long use and knowledge of the world had given me—the philosophy of indifference to most persons and events. I do pique myself on not being ridiculous at this very late period of my life; but when there is not a grain of passion in my affection for you two, and when you both have the good sense not to be displeased at my telling you so (though I hope you would have despised me for the contrary), I am not ashamed to say that your loss is heavy to me; and that I am only reconciled to it by hoping that a winter in Italy, and the journeys and sea air, will be very beneficial to two constitutions so delicate as yours. Adieu! my dearest friends: it would be tautology to subscribe a name to a letter, every

line of which would suit no other man in the world but the writer.

2751. To Miss Mary Berry.

Tuesday, Oct. 12, 1790.

Yesterday was so serene, and the wind so favourable, that I hoped the packet was ready and that you sailed. To-day is blowing, and more to the south. I wish for a brisk wind to carry you swiftly; yet, if I could hold the bag, I should open it so timorously, that Boreas would not be able to squeeze his puffed cheeks through the vent, though I might hear of you sooner. Then I shall long for a line from Rouen, and then from Lyons, and most of all from Turin. Oh, how you have made me long to dip deep into the almanac, and even into that of next year, though it is most prodigal in me to be willing to hurry away a day, who may have so few in bank.

Yesterday morning I had just framed Wolsey, and hung him over the chimney of the little parlour, when the Duchess of Gloucester came, and could scarce be persuaded it was the work of Agnes; but who else *could* have painted it? Milbourne[1], who is here drawing from some of my pictures for his prints to Shakespeare, cried out at it as the finest piece of water-colours he ever beheld, before he knew whose work it is. This was my employment yesterday, but not the only one; for I had my lawyer with me to prepare for securing Cliveden[2], if I should not have another almanac; and he is to bring me a proper *clause* on Monday next.

At night.

The wind has been so high since noon that I should have been very uneasy if it were not full south-west, with which

Letter 2751.—Not in C.

[1] Probably John Milbourn, a portrait painter.

[2] Little Strawberry Hill, which Walpole made over to the Miss Berrys and their father.

Walker & Cockerell Phts

Sir Henry Charles Englefield
7th Baronet
from a drawing by J. Dance.

I think you could not sail. I have been fully apprehensive about the whole of your journey, but had not foreseen that I should be alarmed about your voyage. Now I am impatient for a letter from Dieppe.

I have dined to-day at Bushy with the Guilfords, where were only the two daughters, Mr. Storer, and Sir Harry Englefield, who performed *en professeur* at the game I thought Turkish, but which sounds Moorish; he calls it *Bandalore*[3]. I had written a note to Mrs. Grenville to inquire its name, but I think this will serve, as you only wanted to be told some name, no matter what, as one does about a new face: 'Who is that?' One cares not whether the reply is Thompson or Johnson.

This will be only a journal of scraps till you are settled somewhere, and I can write regularly. Moreover, it is the only way of filling random letters—unless I were to indulge myself on the theme that for your sakes I will avoid. I am little likely here to learn or do anything worth repeating; yet, if you will be content with trifles, my wanting better subjects shall not be an excuse for not writing. It is a common plea with the unwilling; and persons abroad, I know, are often told by their correspondents, who have not the grace of friendship before their eyes, that they did not send them news, concluding they had better information. I may apologize for writing too often, but have too much pleasure in conversing with you in any manner, to lose the opportunity, provided I can hope to give you the least entertainment. Remember, however, that I ask no punctuality of replies—nay, beg you to restrain them. You are young, have much to revisit, many pleasures, I fervently hope, to enjoy; many friends besides to write to, and your healths to re-establish. I certainly have nothing

[3] 'A toy containing a coiled spring, which caused it, when thrown down, to rise again to the hand, by the winding up of the string by which it was held.' (*H. E. D.*)

to do that I like half so well as writing to you two. Do but tell me in short notes your stations, your motions and intentions, and particularly how you both do, and I shall be content: I do give you my word I shall. Writing is bad for delicate constitutions: in the day you must sacrifice some sight or amusement; at night you may be writing too late, or fatiguing yourself when you should repose. Never, I beseech you, let the person who studies your well-being the most be accessory to causing you the least trouble, disquiet, or disorder. This is a positive injunction. Good night.

Wednesday night, 13th.

I received your kind letter from Brighthelmstone this morning, and give you a million of thanks for it. It gives me some hopes that you might be landed on Tuesday morning before the wind changed and rose; but it revived a thousand more anxieties. I do not like a vessel smaller than the packet; and the tempestuous wind of yesterday shocks me, lest it should have overtaken you at sea. That good soul Miss Seton[4] walked over from Richmond to communicate her letter to me—how I love her for it! And she had previously called at Cambridge's to consult him, where his son George, who has often crossed to Dieppe, assured her the vessel would put back to England, or put into Boulogne on change of the wind. It may be so, but I cannot get out of my head the storm of yesterday, every blast of which made me quake, and I tremble more now lest you should have been in its power! Oh, when shall I hear you are safe? I have written to Mrs. D., and told her your being summoned on board suddenly prevented your writing to her.

As you desire my second letter might be directed to Turin, I have settled with good Miss S. that she shall

[4] A cousin of Miss Berry.

write this next Friday to Lyons, and that I will defer this till Tuesday for Turin; that you may be sure of a letter either at the one or the other, and know why you do not hear from us both at once. I hope in God you are safe, and that my fears are groundless! All my letters and fears are for both, which I will not repeat any more. As I shall always I find be writing, you will order any letters to be sent after you from Turin, till I know how to direct farther on. When you are settled anywhere, I shall be more composed, and will think of the more insignificant things of the world.

Friday, 15th.

Words cannot tell what I have felt, and do now feel! The storm on Tuesday terrified me beyond measure, and so I have remained till this minute, that Mrs. D. has most humanely sent me an express to tell me you are landed. I must send him back with this, and will instantly send to Miss Seton to tell her the happy news, and to Cambridge. I am not composed enough to say anything else; but I will write again on Tuesday. Heaven preserve you all!

I have not got my letter yet, but am easy for the present.

2752. To Miss Mary Berry.

Saturday night, Oct. 16, 1790.

The hurry and confusion in which I finished my letter this morning which I had prepared for the post, will have told you better than I can describe the terror I have been under from the storm of Tuesday, and ever since, and the transport of a line from Mrs. D. to tell me you are landed. I will not dwell but on one circumstance, but a dreadful one! I saw in yesterday's newspaper that two hoys had

Letter 2752.—Not in C.

been lost off Plymouth on Tuesday night. You, I believe, know how affection's imagination travels on such an occasion! My letter from you I have not yet received, but expect to-morrow morning, and then will resume the subject of your voyage. Now my fears are returning to land.

This will not depart till Tuesday; yet I have chosen to stay at home and write to you, for my thoughts are not resettled enough for anything else. I met G. H.[1] on Wednesday, who was beginning to condole with me on losing you, but the storm was in my head and I cut him short crossly, for as you are no longer my wives but my children, I can talk of you to nobody but those who love you almost as much as I do.

Not having been out of my house these three days, nor scarce seen a soul in it, I am not yet come to my wordly talk, but hope to be able to entertain you a little soon—arrive but at Turin. I know nothing but two events, not likely to please you.

Poor Mr. Ogilvie[2] has been near killed at Goodwood by an astonishing indiscretion of his own. He went, yes, and with one of his daughters, and without even a stick, into an enclosure where the Duke keeps an elk. The animal attacked him, threw him down, gored him, bruised him—in short, he is not yet out of danger.

Boyd is made governor of Gibraltar, and somebody[3], I know not whom, is appointed lieutenant-governor in the place of your friend O'Hara—I know not how or why, but shall be sorry if he is mortified, and you consequently.

I believe I have one or two nephews in *war* going with the Guards to the West Indies, and therefore one or two nieces that are mourning brides—but I do not inquire, for

[1] George Hardinge.

[2] William Ogilvie, brother-in-law of the Duke of Richmond, by his marriage with the Duke's sister the Duchess of Leinster.

[3] Major-General Sir Henry Calder, Baronet.

I should be a poor comforter just now. The proclamation is out for the Parliament meeting the 25th of next month; but the definitive porter from Spain, that is to open or shut Janus's gates, is not expected back till the 27th of this. That is all I can tell Mr. Berry.

Sunday, noon.

Here is your letter from Dieppe as I expected, and strange it is, that as much as I abhor sea-sickness myself, I am very hard-hearted about yours—to have been only less sick than usual, when I would have compounded for your both rivalling the cascades of St. Cloud, if I could have been certain that you would soon be as dusty as those of Versailles. Oh, don't talk of it—but what harlequin of a Triton whisked your vessel about so as to escape the tempest, though you were twenty-seven hours at sea?—nay, are not you silent about it, lest you should give me a posthumous panic? Thank God you are all safe! I will say no more of the storm, though I shall not forget it, nor recover soon of that sea-sickness.

I think it probable that good Miss Seton may take a walk hither after church, as October is dressed out in all its diamonds; I have my coach ready to convey her back if she does—if not, I will call on her this evening; we must drink the health of your sea-sickness.

I have seen nothing of the Hamptonians; I could not bear to go to them, while my mind was so agitated—consequently I know nothing of the person[4] who was to come to town yesterday, to be married on the 20th; but I do know that his aunt[5] at the foot of yonder hill had heard nothing of it four days ago, nor believes a word of it—nor has her brother been near town these two months.

Mrs. D.[6] dines here to-morrow, and will probably carry

[4] The Marquis of Blandford. [5] Lady Diana Beauclerc.
[6] Mrs. Damer.

this to town with her for Tuesday's post—but I may add a few words.

Sunday night.

If I could continue to predict as well as I have done to-day, I would turn prophet, and I know what I would foretell. Miss S. did come to me, and we had an hour and half of comfortable conversation, and nobody interrupted us, nor would any mortal have been welcome. You may guess the topics – the storm was not forgot. She saw Wolsey over his chimney in a comely frame of black and gold, and to-morrow the paper-man comes to new hang the room in sober brown suiting the occasion. As she was going she desired me to read to her Prior's *Turtle and Sparrow*, and his *Apollo and Daphne*, with which you were so delighted, and which, though scarce known, are two of his wittiest and genteelest poems. There should be new way-posts on our common roads to some of our best poets, since Dr. Johnson, from want of taste and ear, and from mean party-malice, defaced the old indexes as the mob do milestones.

I have heard at Richmond this evening that at Ealing the match is talked of as indubitable; yet yesterday morning the old grandam in Pall Mall disavowed it, and laid the invention on L. M. C.[7] From all this you will not much expect to hear the ceremony is performed. Lord Stopford[8] marries the Duke of Buccleugh's eldest daughter; the Duchess gives her 20,000*l.*, the Duke 10,000*l.*, and they settle fifteen more.

Monday evening.

I have nothing to add but what I am sure would not be new, and therefore as Mrs. D. is returning and will carry this to town, I will conclude.

[7] Lady Mary Coke?

[8] James George Stopford (1765–1835), eldest son of second Earl of Courtown, whom he succeeded in 1810; m. (Jan. 29, 1791) Lady Mary Scott, eldest daughter of third Duke of Buccleuch.

2753. To Miss Mary Berry.

Oct. 22, 1790.

Though Mrs. D. and Mrs. B. recommended your going through Paris, I should have had a new alarm could I have known you would be reduced to take that route—but you had left it before I had any apprehension of it, and I hope are actually at Lyons, or beyond it. Still I shall not feel comfortably till I hear from Turin—and what an age that will be!

I was in town yesterday; passed the evening with Mrs. D., where were Mrs. B. and *the Charming man*[1]; I did not see another creature, and returned hither to-day, but I shall go again on Thursday to take leave of Mrs. D., who sets out on Saturday. She writes to you to-night, for which reason I agreed I would not till Tuesday—and indeed I have already said all I have to say, or at least all I will say. Three days may furnish something. The Johnstones have been at Nuneham, and are actually at Park Place, or I might have heard more of *Marchioness to be or not to be*[2], for those I saw in town knew not a tittle more of the matter, yet the Ides of March, i. e. the 20th of October, are come and gone!—consequently faith *minifies*[3], instead of increasing; and unless Lord Abercorn insists upon the King's declaring that she was born a marchioness, I doubt whether she ever will be one.

My dates hitherto have been, of the 12th to Lyons; of 16th, 19th, and this to Turin. Whither I am to direct next I shall not know till you tell me.

Sunday, 24th, after dinner.

I should be tired of talking of the silly Miss and her match, and of inquiring about them, if you had not charged

Letter 2753.—Not in C.

[1] Edward Jerningham, the poet.

[2] Miss Gunning.

[3] Miss Gunning's mother was a Miss Minifie.

me to send you the progress of a history that at the eve of your departure revived so strangely, without having had a beginning. In its present stage it is a war of duchesses. The bride's aunt [4] firmly asserts it is to be ; the bridegroom's grandmother [5] positively denies it—and she ought to know as first inventress. In the meantime no *sposo* appears, nor his parents, M——- house wanting repainting—in short, everybody but the ducal aunt suspects *the* letter was fictitious somewhence or other.

I have called twice on Miss Seton at Richmond, and made her very happy by your safe arrival at Paris. I went afterwards to Lady Betty Mackinsey, where the Comtesse Émilie played admirably on the harp. The Penns were there, and delighted to hear of you. Lady Dillon [6] told me she heard Lady Goodere say that I have been mighty obliging, and offered to buy the furniture if she and her knight would stay in my house. I am rejoiced at having been so civil, without having said or intended any such thing. I *have* agreed to buy the furniture, but I do not believe it is for the *Gooderes*, though it may be for the *good year*. I wish I was as sure that the one is true, as I am certain that the other is false!

I can tell Mr. B. nothing about war or peace. We have a fleet mighty enough to take, ay, and bring home, Peru and Mexico, and deposit them in a *West India warehouse—vis-à-vis* that in Leadenhall Street. Though we should come by them a little more honestly than we did by the diamonds of Bengal, I shall not be sorry if we make peace and condescend to leave the new world where it was.

Mr. Burke's pamphlet [7] is at last literally advertised for the first of November.

[4] The Duchess of Argyll.
[5] The Duchess of Bedford.
[6] Lady Charlotte Lee, daughter of second Earl of Lichfield and widow of eleventh Baron Dillon.
[7] *Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

Monday, 25th.

The little parlour is new hung, and Wolsey has been installed this morning, and proclaimed president of all the *waterworks* in the world, with shouts of *Viva Santa Agnese!* With these festivities I must conclude for this post. Disposed as I am to be always writing to you two, be sure matter, *outward* matter, only is wanting. I send you heaps of trifles, lest I should omit anything you might like to know, especially as I know not when you will see an English newspaper. You are not to answer any of those trumpery articles—let me write, it amuses me; but remember you are gone for your healths, and are not to be sitting against the edge of a table. Adieu! Adieu!

P.S.—I have just permitted four foreigners to see my house, though past the season, because all their names end in *i*'s, and I must propitiate Italians, when you are, as I hope, on Hesperian ground.

2754. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday, Oct. 31, 1790.

Perhaps I am unreasonably impatient, and expect letters before they can come. I expected a letter from Lyons three days ago, though Mrs. D. told me I should not have one till to-morrow. I have got one to-day; but, alas! from Pougues only, eleven and a half posts short of Lyons! Oh, may Mrs. D. prove in the right to-morrow! Well! I must be happy for the past; and that you had such delightful weather, and but one little accident to your carriage. We have had equal summer till Wednesday last, when it blew a hurricane. I said to it, 'Blow, blow, thou winter wind, I don't mind you now!' but I have not forgotten Tuesday 12th; and now I hope it will be as calm as it is to-day on

Wednesday next, when Mrs. D. is to sail[1]. I was in town on Thursday and Friday, and so were her parents, to take our leaves; as we did on Friday night, supping all at R. House[2]. She set out yesterday morning, and I returned hither.

I am glad you had the amusement of seeing the National Assembly. Did Mr. B. find it quite so august as he intended it should be? Burke's pamphlet is to appear to-morrow, and Calonne has published a thumping one of four hundred and forty pages[3]. I have but begun it, for there is such a quantity of calculations, and one is forced to bait so often to boil milliards of livres down to a rob of pounds sterling, that my head is only filled with figures instead of arguments, and I understand arithmetic less than logic.

Our war still hangs by a hair, they say; and that this approaching week must terminate its fluctuations. Brabant, I am told, is to be pacified by negotiations at the Hague. Though I talk like a newspaper, I do not assume their airs; nor give my intelligence of any sort for authentic, unless when the *Gazette* endorses the articles. Thus, Lord Louvain is made Earl of Beverley, and Lord, Earl of Digby; but in no *Gazette*, though still in the Songs of Sion, do I find that Miss G. is a marchioness. It is not that I suppose you care who gains a step in the aristocracy; but I tell you these trifles to keep you *au courant*, and that at your return you may not make only a baronial curtsey, when it should be lower by two rows of ermine to some new-hatched countess. This is all the news-market furnishes.

Your description of the National Assembly and of the Champ de Mars were both admirable; but the altar of boards and canvas seems a type of their perishable con-

Letter 2754.—[1] For Lisbon, where Mrs. Damer intended to winter.
[2] Richmond House.
[3] *De l'état de la France, présent et à venir.*

stitution, as their air-balloons were before. French visions are generally full of vapour, and terminate accordingly.

I have been at Mrs. Grenville's this evening, who had a small party for the Duchess of Gloucester: there were many inquiries after *my wives.*

You license me to direct this to Bologna, but I prefer Florence, for you will not lose more time by its waiting for you, than by its being sent after you; and I always think that the less complicated the manœuvres of the post, the safer.

You say nothing of your healths—how are Miss Agnes's teeth? Don't omit such essential articles.

Miss Seton has called here again to-day, and was delighted to see your letter which I had just received. She does not leave Richmond till Tuesday, and is to write to me for news of you, if she is long without hearing from one or other of you. I proposed this to her, not only for her satisfaction, but that you may not be worn out by writing. For this reason I make my letters shorter, to set you the example, though I promise not to omit a tittle that I can think you would like to know; and in that light nothing will seem too insignificant to tell you. Even articles that would scarce do for home consumption acquire a value, I know, by coming from home. Besides, Lord Hervey[4], I think, is not at present at Florence, and you may not get a newspaper. Those wretched tattlers, that one so justly despises on their own dunghill, are welcome abroad in hopes of finding a barley-corn or two that are eatable.

I shall go to Park Place next Saturday, 6th. You know why I postponed my visit so long. I announce it to you now, because I shall probably not write on the following Tuesday, but wait till Friday, 12th, when I shall be returned

[4] John Augustus Hervey (1757–1796), Lord Hervey, eldest surviving son of fourth Earl of Bristol, whom he predeceased; minister at Florence, 1787–94.

hither, for I do not love letters taking so many hops before they get into the high post road.

P.S.—Monday. No letter from Lyons. It may be in B. Sq., and I may get it to-morrow; but it will be after this is gone by the coach to my servant in town. If I do get it, it will not damp my impatience for one from Turin, nor that extinguish the same eagerness for one from Florence —in short, I shall not be *perfectly indifferent* till I know you settled somewhere.

2755. To Miss Burney.

As this will come to you by my servant, give me leave to add another word on your most unfounded idea that I can forget you[1]. Believe me, I heartily regret that privation, but would not repine, were your situation, either in point of fortune or position, equal in any degree to your merit. But were your talents given to be buried in obscurity? You have retired from the world to a closet at court—where, indeed, you will still discover mankind, though not disclose it; for if you could penetrate its characters in the earliest glimpses of its superficies, will it escape your piercing eye when it sinks from your inspection, knowing that you have the mirror of truth in your pocket?—I will not embarrass you by saying more, nor would have you take notice of or reply to what I have said; judge, only, that feeling hearts

Letter 2755.—Not in C.; fragment reprinted from Miss Burney's *Diary* (ed. 1891), vol. iii. pp. 293-4.

[1] This letter was a reply to one of Miss Burney's, which she ended as follows:—'And now, can Mr. Walpole pardon this abrupt and troublesome intrusion from one who seemed at least consigned to silence and quiet?—she will not say to oblivion, lest a quotation should occur for an answer: "Seemed, Madam? nay, you were!" She trusts, however, there can be no local impropriety in bringing herself again to life, purely to speak for the dead; yet her courage of renovation does not amount to expecting a place in the memory of Mr. Walpole, without calling to its aid that she has the honour to be, etc., etc.

'F. Burney.'

reflect, not forget. Wishes that are empty look like vanity —my vanity is to be thought capable of esteeming you as much as you deserve, and to be reckoned, though a very distant, a most *sincere* friend—and give me leave to say, dear Madam,

Your most obedient humble servant,

Strawberry Hill, Oct. '90. HOR. WALPOLE.

2755*. To MISS BURNEY.

DEAR MADAM, Nov. 3, 1790.

I am exceedingly vexed for you, and sorry to have kept your servant so long, but I find I could not send you a definitive answer without keeping him much longer. All I can say at present is, that I trust I shall deliver you to-morrow from any further trouble—but not being a lawyer myself nor having one here to consult, I hope you will excuse my sending my servant to you this evening, and he shall wait on you at St. James's to-morrow at two o'clock and bring you the result of my opinion, after I have considered the case as coolly and ably as is my poor power to do this evening.

Yours most cordially,

HOR. WALPOLE.

2755**. To MISS BURNEY.

DEAR MADAM, Strawberry Hill, Nov. 3, at night, 1790.

Mr. Cambridge called on me this morning and prepared me for the vexatious subject of your letter[1], which though

LETTER 2755*.—Not in C.; now printed by kind permission of Archdeacon Burney, owner of the original letter.

LETTER 2755**.—Not in C.; now printed by kind permission of Archdeacon Burney, owner of the original letter.

[1] This and the previous letter relate to a difficulty in which Miss

it mortifies me horridly for the new trouble you have had, and for the triumph of villainy and injustice, yet I trust you will soon be delivered from your inquietude by those very defects of our law which you feel, and which, though glaring as they are in the present case, I agree with you in not wishing to see corrected by any National Assembly of tyrannic assassins[2]. It is very plain, Madam, from Mr. Woodcock's[3] sober advice, that it would be folly and extravagance to set aside the will at the expense of at least 80*l.* to obtain at most less than half that sum for the poor claimants in Swisserland, who would then be liable to pay their late cousin's debts, which are called about 24*l.*, though I cannot learn that they amount to quite eighteen. Give me leave to state both accounts as far as I can collect them from my two servants:—

	£	s.	d.
In Miss Burney's hands	16	0	0
In the perfumer's .	10	0	0
Two watches worth about . . .	4	13	0
Cloaths about . .	4	0	0
	34	13	0

Debts.

	£	s.	d.
To his tailor . .	8	0	0
Burial . . .	3	5	0
Perfumer's journey to Windsor for his effects . . .		15	0
Paid by perfumer at the hospital . .		13	0
	12	13	0

There ought besides to be added to the late Columb's debts

Burney was involved on the death of her manservant Jacob Columb. Columb left his money and effects in Miss Burney's hands. Shortly after his death, one Peter Bayond produced a will in which he was named as joint 'heir,' together with James Columb. The latter with his relative 'Philip' was in Horace Walpole's service.

[2] In her *Diary* (ed. 1891, vol. iii. p. 295) Miss Burney notes: 'I could not forbear concluding my letter with telling him * that the opinion I enclosed for him had almost petrified me, and that, if such was our chance of *justice* with *law*, we must agree never to relate this little history to the democrats abroad, lest we should all be brought forward to illustrate the necessity of universal reform, and the National Assembly should echo with all our names.'

[3] A lawyer consulted by Miss Burney.

* Horace Walpole.

5*l.* 5*s.*, which as he was dying he desired might be given to a woman by whom he had had a child, and which would make the debts amount to 17*l.* 18*s.*

This being the state of your late servant's circumstances or probably very near it, Madam, it is clear that my two servants cannot advise their cousins abroad, nor undertake for them, to contest the will, nor can any of them, in order to punish a rogue, afford to be at the expense of a suit—and thence it is as clear, Madam, that you must pay the money in your hands, and be freed from any farther trouble—except a little suspense, which I will now explain, and give you the best advice I am able, which again will be to take better advice.

Bayeux (I am not sure I spell his name rightly) to cover his fraud, we suppose, joined my servant *James* Columb with himself, as executor and *heir*. Now what I propose is, that you, Madam, should offer Bayeux's attorney to pay the money in your hands to the two executors together, that is, half to one and half to the other, on each giving you a receipt before proper witnesses; and I should also advise you not to write to the attorney yourself, but get a lawyer to write for you, and be present when you pay the money.

As Bayeux has got a probate of the will, I conclude he has also administered, and I do not know whether that will not entitle *him* to receive the whole sum from you—and he certainly will then never pay a farthing to James Columb, who will be cheated as well as his cousins in Swisserland. The will, such as it is, was written by an ignorant foreign schoolmaster, and calls Bayeux and James Columb *heirs* instead of residuary legatees. Philip Columb will bring you this letter to-morrow, Madam, and his brother James will wait on you whenever you have settled to pay the money. I am obliged to go to Park Place on Saturday for three or four days, and cannot do without Philip. I do propose to

be here again on Tuesday, and as business is much more easily transacted by word of mouth than by letters, if Dr. Burney could be so kind as to call on me here on this day or to-morrow sennight, I think we could save you, who have little, time and trouble. In the meantime, to pay you both, you are very welcome to show this to your lawyer. I will detain you, Madam, but by very few words more. I am ashamed that your partiality should have induced you to mention me in so very kind a manner to Miss Cambridge for my behaviour in this affair. I have done nothing more than I should have done for an entire stranger; you yourself, who exercise every virtue so naturally, would not think you had any merit in doing the very same. I should be very happy to have any opportunity of serving or obliging you voluntarily from esteem and good will, but, dear Madam, is it praiseworthy to comply with what you had a right to ask of anybody? I sent my servant when you had business with him, and business that affected his relations; I must have been a brute to you if I had not sent him; and he would have been in the right not to have minded me, but to have obeyed your summons. I am not a despotic democrat but

Your most sincere humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

2756. To Miss Mary Berry.

Park Place, Nov. 8, 1790.

No letter since Pougues! I think you can guess how uneasy I am! It is not the fault of the wind; which has blown from every quarter. To-day I cannot hear, for no post comes in on Mondays. What can have occasioned my receiving no letter from Lyons, when, on the 18th of last month, you were within twelve posts of it? I am now sorry

I came hither, lest by my change of place a letter may have shuttlecocked about, and not have known where to find me; and yet I left orders with Kirgate to send it after me, if one came to Strawberry on Saturday. I return thither to-morrow, but not till after the post is come in here. I am writing to you now, while the company are walked out, to divert my impatience; which, however, is but a bad recipe, and not exactly the way to put you out of my head.

The first and great piece of news is the pacification with Spain. The courier arrived on Thursday morning with a most acquiescent answer to our ultimatum: what that was I do not know, nor much care. Peace contents me, and for my part I shall not haggle about the terms. I have a good general digestion, and it is not a small matter that will lie at my stomach when I have no hand in dressing the ingredients.

The pacification of Brabant is likely to be volume the second. The Emperor, and their Majesties of Great Britain and Prussia, and his Serene Highness the Republic of Holland have sent a card to his turbulent Lowness of Brabant, that they allow him but three weeks to submit to his old sovereign; on promise of a general pardon—or the choice of threescore thousand men ready to march without a pardon.

The third volume, expected, but not yet in the press, is a counter-revolution in France. Of that I know nothing but rumour; yet it certainly is not the most incredible event that rumour ever foretold. In this country the stock of the National Assembly is fallen down to bankruptcy. Their only renegade aristocrat, Earl Stanhope, has, with Lord W. Russel, scratched his name out of the Revolution Club; but the fatal blow has been at last given by Mr. Burke. His pamphlet came out this day sennight, and is far superior to what was expected, even by his warmest

admirers. I have read it twice; and though of three hundred and fifty pages, I wish I could repeat every page by heart. It is sublime, profound, and gay. The wit and satire are equally brilliant; and the whole is wise, though in some points he goes too far: yet in general there is far less want of judgement than could be expected from *him*. If it could be translated—which, from the wit and metaphors and allusions, is almost impossible—I should think it would be a classic book in all countries, except in *present* France. To their tribunes it speaks daggers; though, unlike them, it uses none. Seven thousand copies have been taken off by the booksellers already, and a new edition is preparing. I hope you will see it soon. There ends my gazette.

There is nobody here at present but Mrs. H.[1], Mrs. E. H., and Mrs. Cotton: but what did I find on Saturday? Why, the Prince of Furstemberg, his son, and son's governor! I was ready to turn about and go back; but they really proved not at all unpleasant. The ambassador has not the least German stiffness or hauteur; is extremely civil, and so domestic a man, that he talked comfortably of his wife and eight children, and of his fondness for them. He understands English, though he does not speak it. The son, a good-humoured lad of fifteen, seems well-informed: the governor, a middle-aged officer, speaks English so perfectly, that even by his accent I should not have discovered him for a foreigner. They stayed all night, and went to Oxford next morning before I rose.

To-day is very fine, and the wind has been favourable these two days for Mrs. D. I am out of humour with Miss Foldson[2]. Though paid for, she has not yet sent me your

LETTER 2756.—[1] *Née* March, widow of Colonel William Thomas Hervey, grandson of John Hervey, first Earl of Bristol; Mrs. E. H. was Mrs. Elizabeth Hervey.

[2] Anne Foldsone (d. 1851), miniature painter, known after her marriage as Mrs. Mee.

pictures, and has twice broken her promise of finishing them.

I have taken a great liberty, which I hope Mr. B. will forgive, though a breach of trust. Having only a coach myself, and Saturday being very wet, and being afraid of a bad hired chaise, I did allow myself to use his hither. I will do so no more.

I reserve the rest of my paper for, I hope, an answer. Oh, I do hope so.

Strawberry Hill, 9th, at night.

This morning, before I left Park Place, I had the relief and joy of receiving your letter of October 24 from Lyons. It would have been still more welcome if dated from Turin; but, as you have met with no impediments so far, I trust you got out of France as well as through it. I do hope, too, that Miss Agnes is better, as you say; but when one is very anxious about a person, credulity does not take long strides in proportion. I am not surprised at your finding voiturins, or anybody, or anything dearer: where all credit and all control are swept away, every man will be a tyrant in proportion to his necessities and his strength. Societies were invented to temperate force: but it seems force was liberty, and much good may it do the French with being delivered from everything but violence!—which I believe they will soon taste pro and con. For the impositions on *you* there is a remedy at Charing Cross [3].

I have received all your five letters. *I have sent three to Turin of* 16, 19, 25 of Oct., and one of Nov. 2 to Florence.

To-day's paper says the ratification of the peace with Spain is arrived. The stocks are extremely pleased with it.

[3] Drummond, Horace Walpole's banker, had his shop at Charing Cross. Walpole was anxious that the Berrys should draw upon his account at Drummond's in case of any money difficulties.

I thought in one of my last that Lord Hervey was in England, but it is only my Lady[4], as his cousins told me yesterday at P. P.

You make me smile by desiring me to continue my affection. Have I so much time left for inconstancy? For threescore years and ten I have not been very fickle in my friendships: in all those years I never found such a pair as you and your sister. Should I meet with a superior pair—but then they must not be deficient in any one of the qualities which I found in you two—why, perhaps, I may change; but, with that double mortgage on my affections, I do not think you are in much danger of losing them. You shall have timely notice if a second couple drops out of the clouds and falls in my way.

Nov. 11[5].

I had a letter from Mrs. D. at Falmouth. She suffered much by cold and fatigue, and probably sailed on Saturday evening last, and may be at Lisbon by this time, as you, I trust, are in Italy.

Mr. Burke's pamphlet has quite turned Dr. Price's head. He got upon a table at their club, toasted to our Parliament becoming a National Assembly, and to admitting no more peers of their assembly, having lost the only one they had. They themselves are very like the French *États*: two more members got on the table (their pulpit), and broke it down:—so be it!

The Marquisate is just where it was—to be and not to be. Duchess A.[6] is said to be worse. Della Crusca[7] has published a poem, called *The Laurel of Liberty*, which, like the 'Enragés[8],' has confounded and overturned all ideas. There

[4] Elizabeth, daughter of Colin Drummond, of Megginch Castle, Perth, and of Quebec; m. (1779) John Augustus Hervey, Lord Hervey; d. 1818.

[5] This portion has hitherto been printed as a separate letter.

[6] The Duchess of Argyll.

[7] Robert Merry, who was a member of the Della Cruscan Academy in Florence.

[8] 'Les Blancs ou les *Enragés*, nom

are *gossamery tears* and *silky oceans*—the first time, to be sure, that anybody ever *cried cobwebs*, or that the *sea* was made of *paduasoy*. There is, besides, a violent tirade against a considerable personage [9], who, it is supposed, the author was jealous of, as too much favoured a few years ago by a certain Countess. You may guess why I am not more explicit: for the same reason I beg you not to mention it at all; it would be exceedingly improper.

As the Parliament will meet in a fortnight, and the town be plumper, my letters may grow more amusing; though, unless the weather grows worse, I shall not contribute my leanness to its *embonpoint*. Adieu!

2757. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Nov. 13, 1790.

Oh yes, yes, Chamberry is more welcome than Turin, though I thought nothing could make me so happy as a letter from the latter; but Chamberry is nearer, and has made me easy sooner. What a melancholy forlorn object did I think that antique capital of a dismal duchy formerly! It looked like a wife who had been deserted by her husband for many years, and kept at his old mansion in Westmorland, while he was living with an actress in London. Now I am surprised the King of Sardinia does not return to that delightful spot, which appears to me like the palace of the sun, diffusing light and warmth even to the northern islands. With what anxiety did I read your letter while you were in the hands of the savages at Burgoin! I figured them with scalping knives and setting up a war-whoop!

que l'on donna aux membres du côté gauche de l'Assemblée Nationale quand elle eut été installée (Novembre 1789) dans la Salle du Manège, près des Tuileries.' (Lalanne, *Dict. Hist. de la France.*)

[9] Apparently the Emperor Leopold, who, as Grand Duke of Tuscany, had been Merry's rival for the favour of Countess Cowper.

Letter 2757.—Not in C.

But you are all safe, and I shall not have another panic till you are returning, which I hope will not be through European Abyssinia, that land of hyenas! Pray burn all my letters; I trembled when they were ransacking your trunks, lest they should meet with any of them; for though I was very cautious while you were in France, I was afraid that my eagerness to learn your arrival at Turin might be misinterpreted, though meaning nothing but impatience to know you out of France, into which I hope you will never set your feet more, but return home through Switzerland and Flanders, which I conclude will be resettled shortly. At any rate, I insist on your burning this, that you may not forget it and have it in your trunk. I was the more alarmed, as I have lately heard that Lord Bruce[1] and Mr. Locke[2], whom Miss Agnes has rivalled, riding out in Languedoc, escorted by two national guards, and the former spitting, the wind carried the spittle on one of those heroes, on which they seized our countrymen and imprisoned them all night in a sentry-box, for imprisonment is the characteristic of liberty, and when all men are equal, accidents are punished as only crimes used to be; which makes it delicious to live in a state of nature! I am so relieved by your letter that I do not believe I shall be uneasy about *you* again this month. About Miss Agnes, yes, unless I hear she is as well as if every day was a Chambéry-day. By the way, you affront my dear city by calling it *a dirty place*. So far from that, it is smug, beautiful, *sublimibus alta columnis*, and deserves to be the metropolis of Europe.

You must have been charmed at the Comédie. I was, though not there, and prefer Mlle. (what is her name?) to the Sainval. In short, I am so content that I shall not

[1] Charles Brudenell Bruce, Lord Bruce, eldest son of first Earl of Ailesbury (of the second creation), whom he succeeded in 1814.

[2] William Locke the younger (1767–1847), of Norbury, near Mickleham in Surrey, a well-known amateur artist.

inquire any more about the foreign post, nor care whether you write to me or not; at least, pray don't plague me with long letters the moment you arrive anywhere fatigued and cold. Seriously, I do beg of you not to write long letters; let me chatter to you as much as I will. My mind is at peace, which it has not been at all since the first moment you talked of passing through France, and I was not the happiest man in the world from the day Mr. Batt told me of your intention of going abroad. After both came the storm the day you sailed. Chambéry has made amends for a good deal, and I will pass a few—oh, I fear more than a *few* months contentedly; but then there is to come a journey back—not through France, I hope: the sea to cross, which I shall not leave out of my reckoning a second time! All may be forgotten, if I see you next autumn at Cliveden, at *your own* Cliveden, *alias* little Chambéry.

I know nothing, nothing at all; but I go to town to-morrow for two days, and may pick up something; but I could not help indulging my joy by writing this against Tuesday's post, though I wrote but yesterday. For the future I will not be so intemperate. I have sent a line from Chambéry to Miss Seton, and shall dispatch another by the first packet to Lisbon, for I am not so very particular. Others can be anxious about you as well as I.

Berkeley Square—for now you are clear of the Abyssinians, no place is afraid of signing its own name—Tuesday, 15th.

I might as well be in a country village. You will not be a tittle the wiser for my being in London, which is still a solitude. I have not heard a syllable of news. I supped at Miss Farren's last night. There were only Lord Derby and Lady Milner[3]; the latter produced a letter from her

[3] Diana, daughter of Humphrey Stuart, and wife of Sir William Mordaunt Milner, third Baronet, of Nun Appleton, Yorkshire.

sister-in-law, Mrs. Sturt, where Lord Blandford is and has been these three months. She says he has heard of his pretended letter[4], laughs at it, and protests it is not his, nor is there the least foundation for it.

Mrs. Damer did not sail so soon as she expected; at least, the wind was contrary both on the Saturday and Sunday; but it has been favourable since, and I hope she is at Chamberry—pho! I mean Lisbon.

If I learn nothing before to-morrow morning, when I shall return to Strawberry, I shall let this amble to Florence without a word more. Adieu!

2758. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday, Nov. 18, 1790.

On Tuesday morning, after my letter was gone to the post, I received yours of the 2nd (as I have all the rest) from Turin, and it gave me very little of the joy I had so much meditated to receive from a letter thence. And why did not it?—because I had got one on Saturday, which anticipated and augmented all the satisfaction I had allotted for Turin. You will find my Tuesday's letter, if ever you receive it, intoxicated with Chamberry; for which, and all your kind punctuality, I give you a million of thanks. But how cruel to find that you found none of my letters at Turin! There ought to have been two at least, of October the 16th and 19th. I have since directed one thither of the 25th; and two to Florence of Nov. 2nd and 11th, besides Tuesday's of the 16th; but, alas! from ignorance, there was *par Paris* on none of them; and the Lord knows at how many little German courts they may have been baiting! I shall put *par Paris* on this; but beg you will tell me, as soon as you can, which route is the shortest and the

[4] In connection with his supposed match with Miss Gunning.

safest; that is, by which you are most likely to receive them. You do me justice in concluding there has been no negligence of mine in the case; indeed, I have been ashamed at the multiplicity of my letters, when I had scarce anything to tell you but my own anxiety to hear of your being quietly settled at Florence, out of the reach of all commotions. And how could I but dread your being molested by some accident, in the present state of France? and how could your healths mend in bad inns, and till you can repose somewhere? Repose you will have at Florence, but I shall fear the winter for you there: I suffered more by cold there, than by any place in my life; and never came home at night without a pain in my breast, which I never felt elsewhere, yet then I was very young and in perfect health. If either of you suffer there in any shape, I hope you will retire to Pisa.

My inquietude, that presented so many alarms to me before you set out, has, I find, and am grieved for it, not been quite in the wrong. Some inconveniences I am persuaded you have sunk: yet the difficulty of landing at Dieppe, and the ransack of your poor harmless trunks at Burgoin, and the wretched lodgings with which you were forced to take up at Turin, count deeply with me; and I had much rather have lost all credit as a prophet, since I could not prevent your journey. May it answer for your healths! I doubt it will not in any other respect, as you have already found by the voiturins. In point of pleasure, is it possible to divest myself so radically of all self-love as to wish you may find Italy as agreeable as you did formerly? In all other lights, I do most fervently hope there will be no drawbacks on your plan. Should you be disappointed any way, you know what a warm heart is open to receive you back; and so will *your own* Cliveden be too.

I am glad you met the Bishop of Arras[1], and am much pleased that he remembers me. I saw him very frequently at my dear old friend's[2], and liked him the best of all the Frenchmen I ever knew. He is extremely sensible, easy, lively, and void of prejudices. Should he fall in your way again, I beg you will tell him how sincere a regard I have for him. He lived in the strictest union with his brother, the Archbishop of Tours, whom I was much less acquainted with, nor know if he be living.

I have heard nothing since my Tuesday's letter. As I still hope its predecessors will reach you, I will not repeat the trifling scraps of news I have sent you in them. In fact, this is only a trial whether *par Paris* is a better passport than a direction without it; but I am grievously sorry to find difficulty of correspondence superadded to the vexation of losing you. Writing to you was grown my chief occupation. I wish Europe and its broils were in the East Indies, if they embarrass us quiet folks, who have nothing to do with their squabbles.

The Duchess of Gloucester, who called on me yesterday, charged me to give her compliments to you both.

Miss Foldson has not yet sent me your pictures: I was in town on Monday, and sent to reproach her with having twice broken her promise: her mother told my servant that Miss was at Windsor, drawing the Queen and Princesses. That is not the work of a moment. I am glad *all* the Princes are not on the spot. The *Charming man* passed Tuesday here and part of yesterday, and I carried him back to Lady Mount-Edgecumbe—to-day he goes to Park Place and thence to Nuneham. Old Brutus was at the point of death the night before last; I have not heard of her since.

LETTER 2758.— [1] Louis François Marc Hilaire de Conzié. He became Bishop of Arras in 1769; the bishopric was temporarily suppressed in 1790, as was the archiepiscopate of Tours, held since 1775 by Joachim François Mamert de Conzié.

[2] Mme. du Deffand.

I think of continuing here till the weather grows very bad; which it has not been at all yet, though not equal to what I am rejoiced you have found. I have no Somerset or Audley Street to receive me; Mrs. Damer is gone too. The Conways remain at Park Place till after Christmas; it is entirely out of fashion for women to grow old and stay at home in an evening. They invite you, indeed, now and then, but do not expect to see you till midnight; which is rather too late to begin the day, unless one was born but twenty years ago. I do not condemn any fashions, which the young ought to set, for the old certainly ought not; but an oak that has been going on in its old way for an hundred years, cannot shoot into a Maypole in three years, because it is the mode to plant Lombardy poplars.

What I should have suffered, if *your* letters, like mine, had wandered through Germany! I, you was sure, had written, and was in no danger. Dr. Price, who had whetted his ancient talons last year to no purpose, has had them all drawn by Burke, and the Revolution Club is as much exploded as the Cock Lane Ghost; but you, in order to pass a quiet winter in Italy, *would* pass through a fiery furnace. Fortunately, you have not been singed, and the letter from Chamberry has composed all my panics, but has by no means convinced me that I was not perfectly in the right to endeavour to keep you at home. One does not put one's hand in the fire to burn off a hangnail; and, though health is delightful, neither of you were out of order enough to make a rash experiment. I would not be so absurd as to revert to old arguments, that happily proved no prophecies, if my great anxiety about you did not wish, in time, to persuade you to return through Switzerland and Flanders, if the latter is pacified and France is not; of which I see no likelihood.

Pray forgive me, if parts of my letters are sometimes

tiresome; but can I appear only and always cheerful when you two are absent, and have another long journey to make, ay, and the sea to cross again? My fears cannot go to sleep like a *paroli* at faro till there is a new deal, in which even then I should not be sure of winning. If I see you again, I will think I have gained another *milleleva*, as I literally once did; with this exception, that I was vehemently against risking a doit at the game of travelling. Adieu!

2759. To Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night, Nov. 27, 1790.

I am waiting for a letter from Florence, not with perfect patience, though I could barely have one, even if you did arrive, as you intended, on the 12th; but twenty temptations might have occurred to detain you in that land of eye and ear sight: my chief eagerness is to learn that you have received at least some of my letters. I wish too to know, though I cannot yet, whether you would have me direct *par Paris*, or as I did before. In this state of uncertainty I did not prepare this to depart this morning; nor, though the Parliament met yesterday, have I a syllable of news for you, as there will be no debate till all the members have been sworn, which takes two or three days. Moreover, I am still here: the weather, though very rainy, is quite warm; and I have much more agreeable society at Richmond, with small companies and better hours, than in town, and shall have till after Christmas, unless great cold drives me thither. Lady Di, Selwyn, the Penns, the Onslows, Douglases, Mackinsys, Keenes, Lady Mount-Edgcumbe, all stay, and some of them meet every evening. The Boufflers's too are constantly invited, and the Comtesse Émilie sometimes carries her harp, on which they say she plays better than Orpheus; but as I never heard him on earth, nor *chez*

Proserpine, I do not pretend to decide. Lord Fitzwilliam has been here too; but was in the utmost danger of being lost on Saturday night, in a violent storm between Calais and Dover, as the captain confessed to him when they were landed. Do you think I did not ache at the recollection of a certain Tuesday when you were sailing to Dieppe?

Mr. C. sent me notice yesterday that he and his daughter have let your house very favourably for *five* months—will you forgive me when I own I was glad it was for no longer? His Parnassian vein is opened again—it is full moon.

Sunday, Nov. 28, particularly to Miss Agnes[1].

Though I write to both at once, and reckon your letters to come equally from both, yet I delight in seeing your hand with a pen as well as with a pencil, and you express yourself as well with the one as with the other. Your part in that which I have been so happy as to receive this moment has singularly obliged me, by your having saved me the terror of knowing you had a torrent to cross after heavy rain. No cat is so afraid of water for herself, as I am grown to be for you. That panic, which will last for many months, adds to my fervent desire of your returning early in the autumn, that you may have neither fresh water nor the *silky* ocean to cross in winter. Precious as our insular situation is, I am ready to wish with the Frenchman, that you could somehow or other get to it by land,—'Oui, c'est une isle toujours, je le sçais bien; mais, par exemple, en allant d'alentour, n'y auroit-il pas moyen d'y arriver par terre?' I was delighted too to hear yesterday from Mr. C., from your sister's letter, that *you* have recovered your healthy looks—pray bring them back with *you*. Your house is let for *six* months, and at seven guineas a week. This and the rest is to both, and in answer.

Letter 2759.—[1] Hitherto printed as a separate letter.

Correggio never pleased me in proportion to his fame: his grace touches upon grimace; the mouth of the beautiful angel at Parma curls up almost into a half-moon. Still I prefer Correggio to the *lourd* want of grace in Guercino, who is to me a German edition of Guido. I am sorry the bookseller would not let you have an *Otranto*. Edwards told me, above two months ago, that he every day expected the whole impression; and he has never mentioned it waiting for my corrections. I will make Kirgate write to him, for I have told you that I am still here. We have had much rain, but no flood; and yesterday and to-day have exhibited Florentine skies.

From town I know nothing; but that on Friday, after the King's speech, Earl Stanhope made a most frantic speech on the National Assembly and against Calonne's book, which he wanted to have taken up for high treason. He was every minute interrupted by loud bursts of laughter; which was all the answer he received or deserved. His suffragan Price has published a short sneaking equivocal answer to Burke, in which he pretends his triumph over the King of France alluded to July, not to October, though his sermon was preached in November. Credat—but not Judæus Apella, as Mr. Burke so wittily says of the assignats. Mr. Grenville[2], the Secretary of State, is made a peer, they say to assist the Chancellor[3] in the House of Lords: yet the papers pretend the Chancellor is out of humour, and will resign; the first may be true, the latter probably not.

Richmond, my metropolis, flourishes exceedingly. The Duke of Clarence arrived at his palace there last night, between eleven and twelve, as I came from Lady Douglas.

[2] William Wyndham Grenville (1759–1834), third surviving son of Hon. George Grenville; cr. (Nov. 25, 1790) Baron Grenville of Wotton-under-Bernewood. He had already filled many important offices. He was Foreign Secretary, 1791–1801; Prime Minister, 1806–7.

[3] Lord Thurlow; he remained in office till 1792.

His eldest brother and Mrs. F. dine there to-day with the D. of Q., as his Grace, who called here this morning, told me, on the very spot where lived Charles the First, and where are the portraits of his principal courtiers from Cornbury. Q. has taken to that palace at last, and has frequently company and music there in an evening. I intend to go.

The very old uncle of the Abbé Nichols is dead, and, as he tells me, has left well to his mother and him, and he is come to live there with her, and I shall hear him sing, I conclude, at the Duke's concerts.

The Gunning match remains, I believe, *in statu quo non.* My coachman does air your chaise: have you received my letter which tells you how much liberty *I* took in airing it?

Two mails have arrived at Falmouth this week from Lisbon, and yet I have not yet heard of Mrs. D.'s arrival there, but I conclude her father has.

Monday, 29th.

I am going to dine at Hampton with Lady Cecilia Johnstone, and am to attend her in the evening to Lady Mary Duncan's Monday, whom I never happened to visit before, though we have been so long inhabitants of the same planet. I hope not to pass so many evenings out of my own parish this time twelvemonth! Old Brutus is still alive, but almost insensible.

I suppose none of my Florentine acquaintance are still upon earth. The handsomest woman there, of my days, was a Madame Grifoni, *my* fair Geraldine: she would now be a Methusalemess, and much more like a frightful picture I have of her by a one-eyed German painter. I lived then with Sir Horace Mann, in Casa Mannetti in Via de' Santi Apostoli, by the Ponte di Trinità. Pray, worship the works of Masaccio, if any remain; though I think the best have been burnt in a church. Raphael himself borrowed from

him. Fra Bartolomeo, too, is one of my standards for great ideas; and Benvenuto Cellini's Perseus a rival of the antique, though Mrs. D. will not allow it. Over against the Perseus is a beautiful small front of a house, with only three windows, designed by Raphael; and another, I think, near the Porta San Gallo, and, I believe, called Casa Panciatici or Pandolfini.

I hope to-morrow or next day to receive your letter from Florence, but am forced to send this to town to-night. If you have not received *all* my letters, you will not understand some passages in this. You have, I trust, recovered the fatigues of your journey. Adieu!

2760. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 1, 1790.

Indeed, my too indulgent Lady, my letters are written so idly, and filled with such trifles as occur, as Arabian tales, &c., that they are very unfit to be seen by any but yourselves, for whose amusement I send them; and being generally only answers to yours, they must be Hebrew to anybody else. This is merely a reply to your last. Madame de Sillery's[1] protest against the *Monseigneur* was no panic, but an emanation of that *poissarde* cant that her recreant protector has adopted. When the late Emperor died, she forbade her pupils to mourn for him. The Duc de Chartres[2] obeyed. The Duc de Montpensier[3], the second son, about seventeen, would not, but bespoke a black coat. La Gouvernante said to him, 'Quelle fantaisie est-ce cela?' 'Fantaisie!' cried the Prince, 'est-ce une fantaisie que de vouloir porter

Letter 2760.—[1] Better known as Mme. de Genlis—a title which she retained, while her husband was known as the Marquis de Sillery.

[2] Louis Philippe (1773–1850), Duc de Chartres; succeeded his father as Duc d'Orléans, 1793; King of France as Louis Philippe, 1830–48.

[3] Antoine Philippe (1775–1807), Duc de Montpensier.

le deuil de l'Empereur?' 'Well, then!' said the mock Minerva, 'you shall have no other coat till that is worn out.' Would not one think that the Duc de Chartres was *her* son, and the two others sprung from Henri Quatre by the *Duchess* of Orléans[4]?

One word more about Mr. Burke's book: I know the tirade on the Queen of France is condemned, and yet I must avow I admire it much. It paints her exactly as she appeared to me the first time I saw her when Dauphiness. She was going after the late King to chapel, and shot through the room like an aerial being, all brightness and grace, and without seeming to touch earth—*vera incessu patuit dea!* Had I Mr. Burke's powers, I would have described her in his words. I like 'the swords leaping out of their scabbards'; in short, I am not more charmed with his wit and eloquence, than with his enthusiasm. Every page shows how sincerely he is in earnest—a wondrous merit in a political pamphlet. All other party writers *act* zeal for the public, but it never seems to flow from the heart. That cordiality, like a phial of spirits, will preserve his book, when some of his doctrines would have evaporated in fume. Lord Stanhope's were the ravings of a lunatic, imagining he could set the world on fire with phosphorus. Lord Lansdowne, I hear, said there was some good sense in that rant. How fortunate that Price and his adherents were intoxicated by their own hopes, and flattered themselves that Europe was in so combustible a temper, that by throwing their farthing squibs from a pulpit, they should set even this country in a blaze, and like the wretches hanged last week for burning houses, should plunder some silver candlesticks from the altars in our churches, to which *the rights of men* entitle them. That proclamation of the rights of men is *ipso facto* a dissolution

[4] Louise Marie Adelaïde de Bourbon, daughter of the Duc de Penthièvre; divorced in 1792.

of all society, into which men entered for the defence of the rights of every individual. The consequence of universal equality would be, that the industrious only would labour, the idle not. Who then would be to maintain the inactive? Must the produce of the labours of the laborious be shared with the indolent? Oh, but there should be some government—then the governed would not be equal with the governors; but it is idle to confute nonsense! All the blessed liberty the French seemed to have gained is, that every man or woman, if *poissardes* are women, may hang whom they please. Dr. Price adopting such freedom, opened the nation's eyes—*Honi soit qui mal y pense!*

P.S. Your Ladyship forgot to send me the solution of the riddle.

2761. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 9, 1790.

Your Ladyship has furnished me with so many subjects, that I doubt whether I shall be able to crowd my answers into a single sheet of my small paper. I may branch into a pamphlet, while I am only replying to what you have said to me; but I must preface all by imploring you not to exhibit my letters. Though I am and must be proud of Lady Ravensworth's approbation of my sentiments, for I should not be a mortal if I had not a grain of vanity, nor should be believed if I denied it, for whoever has been imprudent enough to be an author must have had some; yet I am seriously in earnest in begging you will not show my letters. Foolish as I have been in publishing anything, it is my sober desire now not to have my name brought into question: I wish to pass my remnant of days forgotten and in indolent quiet; yet by having formerly committed myself

in public, the impertinent newspapers bandy about my name, though I give not the smallest handle for it: an instance you mention, Madam, is a proof. Mr. Burke ordered Dodsley to send me his book, though I have not seen him three times in three years. Good breeding obliged me to thank him, and my real admiration called on me to avow it—yet, will you believe, Madam? what is now called a *fine letter*, I might safely swear, did not contain six lines; and all it said was, that unless I could write as well as he does, I could not fully express my admiration, yet did not doubt but he would have that of mankind. I do not recollect the very words, but am sure that was the whole substance, and am much mistaken if that was a *fine letter*; nor would it ever have entered into my head, no, nor into vanity's own head, to talk of such a simple compliment—and yet I have been told that it has been mentioned in a newspaper! I cannot suspect that Mr. Burke could think it worth his while to talk of such a natural civility; but somebody might be with him when he received it, and must have reported it, till it descended to the newspapers. Let me entreat your Ladyship not to contribute to my being game for coffee-houses; my vanity does not reach *jusque-là*. Alas! if my preface has got overleaf, how shall I keep the rest within any bounds?

I am not surprised at Mr. Fox or Mr. Fitzpatrick for disliking *the extent* of Mr. Burke's notions: I should be mortified if the former did not admire the composition, and should readily distrust my own judgement, if the latter and Mr. Hare did not keep me in countenance. The last, I have been told, says, that though he would submit to Mr. Fox in everything else, he cannot give up Mr. Burke's book. I, who have more reason to be humble, and who certainly shall not set up my understanding against one so superior as Mr. Fox's, cannot help being rejoiced at its publication. Being a speculative and not a practical politician, my opinion may be biased by

outward circumstances. I acknowledge, too, that I am apt to have strong prejudices both when I like and dislike; and, though time has worn them down to at least a smoother surface, I believe that the wit and eloquence of the work in question contributed to enchant me. Yet I must persist, without any variation in my principles, in applauding the publication *at the present moment*, when reformation is gone raving mad, and, like Ceres, with blazing torches, would set fire to and destroy all the harvests upon earth because her daughter's liberty had been ravished. Reformation, which is everywhere perpetually wanted, is, I am grieved to say, a most dangerous chief justice, and more apt to *terminer* than to *oyer*, and to commit more spoil than the criminals it arrests. This is no novelty of opinion in me. Thirty years ago I had a dispute with Dame Macaulay on the same ground. I told her it was a settled maxim of mine *that no great country was ever saved by good men*, because good men will not go the lengths that may be necessary. Was *the Revolution* brought about by good men? No, the best patriots hesitated; the worst, Lord Sunderland, did not boggle—he pushed King James down the precipice. I went further; I owned to her that I should always be a coward about spilling the blood of others, and at this moment mine recoils when I hear the advocates of the French *États* cry, 'A revolution cannot be effected without blood, and that in France has cost but little!' My heavens! who has a patent from above, and without law, to shed a drop? In that case, I fear the *forum conscientiae* is a most wicked tribunal. I went much further, I remember, with Mrs. Macaulay: I said, 'Madam, had I been Luther, and could have known (even if persuaded that I was right in my premises, nay, had I even thought I was inspired) that for *the chance* of saving millions of souls I should be the cause of a million of lives, at least, being sacrificed before

my doctrines could be established, it must have been a most palpable angel, and in a most heavenly livery, before he should have set me to work.' Thus I am but uniform, not changed.

Another of my tenets, not a very practicable one, is this: the excellence of our constitution consists in the balance of the three powers. Unfortunately it is the nature of a balance to fluctuate by a breath of air. I have lived long enough to see King, Lords, Commons, preponderate at different periods. The political rule that I would wish always to see followed should be, that whenever any one of the three powers preponderates, the other two should join against and counteract it. The first power has undoubtedly of late years been the heaviest; but that fourth power, that within these two years has started out of the earth like the black cloud in the *Arabian Nights*, and which dispersing, disclosed an infernal Afrite—that power does not tend to balance, but overturn all three. Mr. Burke, with Solomon's seal, has put the evil spirits to flight; and though his talisman, I confess, will remain and be serviceable to Pharaoh's priests hereafter, I am poor-spirited enough to comfort myself with the appearance of the lovely gaudy rainbow that promises me security from the deluge I apprehended; and I have another comfort, which is, the shock lately given through Europe to prerogative is a counter-security to liberty. Their Majesties will be content with what prerogative they can preserve from the convulsion, and not think of extending it for some years, unless the ravage of anarchy in France drives three or four of them to unite to suppress it, as they may do now on the pacification of Brabant. I own I felt for the latter, they were provoked by the despotism of the late Emperor; and acted from better, though mistaken, notions than the French, for the Flemings meant the defence of their

religion; the French, though most intolerant, as Mr. Burke has shown, have no religion at all. This capital discordance between the two rebellions may have very wholesome consequences.

If the confusions in France are quelled by force, as I conclude they will be, the present prosecution of the clergy [1] there would be likely to produce a full restoration of the Papal system; but that will be counterbalanced by the late enthusiasm of the Flemings; but I am running into speculations, which always contract a propensity to prediction. I hope I have explained and cleared my own principles; with all my prejudices, I have given proofs of moderation before. My own old friends have blamed my tenderness to Lord Clarendon, my palliation of Charles I for his countenancing Lord Glamorgan [2], and my doubting the disinterestedness of Mr. Hampden. Perhaps it is no mighty crime not to please either side, provided not a glimpse of self-interest is the consequence, of which I hope I am clear; except that being by my station an aristocrat, and by my father's goodness a placeman for life, I cannot wish to be swept into the common sewers. I avow all, I conceal nothing, but I maintain that I am not changed in any principle; yet if one must make an option between Mirabeau and Mr. Burke, I declare I am a Burkist.

LETTER 2761.—[1] The clergy 'ceased to be a separate corporation in the state. Their Church property was seized and sold, and they were reduced to the position of mere salaried functionaries. The monasteries were abolished. Monastic vows were forbidden, and soon the "civil constitution" drove the clergy to the alternative of abandoning either their cures or their allegiance to the Pope. . . . The state by its own authority diminished the number of bishoprics, rearranged the dioceses in accordance with the new division of departments, made the bishops and curés eligible by the same electors as the members of the National Assembly, forbade the newly-elected bishops to demand their confirmation from the Pope, and finally exacted from the clergy an oath of adhesion to a constitution which was directly opposed to the principles of their Church. Out of 138 bishops only four consented to take it. Out of 70,000 priests 46,000 were deprived of their cures, and a great schism divided France.' (Lecky, *Hist. Cent. XVIII*, ed. 1896, vol. vi. p. 425.)

[2] See note 6 on letter to Hume of July 15, 1758.

There are a few other passages I wish to answer, but my poor hand is so weary by writing all this in a breath, that I must stop and cannot send it away to-day.

Friday, 10th.

I have seen good old Lord George [3] and would have persuaded him to read the pamphlet, which I acknowledged I admired, as I have to Mrs. Bouverie; but did not prevail. What your Ladyship says of the authoresses of your sex does not proceed from want of strength of head, but from the rarity of grave discussions among them. When they do inform themselves, they know their acquisitions are uncommon, and it makes them vain. I have seen it the case of great lawyers retired from business, who, having taken to reading the classics, have quoted the commonplaces of Horace, which an Etonian of twenty would blush to cite, knowing all his contemporaries were as familiar with them as he. I thank your Ladyship for your impartiality in telling me of Lady Ravensworth's partiality to my niece. I flatter myself she is not undeserving of either, and wish she was so happy as to be equally known to both!

2762. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday at midnight, Dec. 10, 1790.

After receiving yours from Bologna ten days ago, I expected another from Florence in three days, as you promised to write thence on your arrival, but I have none till this minute that on returning from Richmond, I find one on my table dated as long ago as the 16th of last month, and what, alas! has it told me but your utter disappointment and most natural vexation at the loss, at least at the want, of any one letter, but Mrs. D.'s, from England? Oh, how shall I expect you to receive any, if all have

[3] Lord George Cavendish.

Letter 2762.—Not in C.

miscarried; how shall I direct mine? Till you told me to put *par Paris*, I did direct like Mrs. D., yet you have not received them. I know but one consolation to offer to you, and that is, *all* failing, you have no reason to be alarmed particularly for any of your friends; and for a succedaneum to your loss of the thread of domestic occurrences, I will keep a minute journal of all I know and hear, and keep it till I can send it by some secure hand or method. In my present distress for you and myself on this cruel disappointment and uncertainty, I cannot recollect anything I have said, and I must send this away to town to-morrow in time, or it will not set out before Tuesday, by which time I will try to remember what events have happened, though at this moment I cannot recall a single one of any consequence. How happy I shall be if by that day I can learn that your letters have at last reached you!

This being but a momentary essay to see if you can get a line from me, and half in despair at the sad cruel prospect of our correspondence being cut off, I will say but few words more, to assure you I am perfectly well, and will search every method upon earth of conveying letters to you. I have not heard from Mrs. D. yet, but conclude her parents have, as I see by the papers two packets have arrived from Lisbon, and the last I conclude since she must have landed there. That letters to you, two private young Englishwomen, going to Italy for health, and connected with nobody ministerial here, and corresponding with nobody but persons involved in no party, and writing about nothing political, should be opened in France, and still more wonderful, should continue to be opened there and not forwarded, is quite astonishing! I should rather suspect they have gone by Flanders and been lost in the confusions there; but as the Emperor is now in possession

again of that country, I hope our terrible interruption will cease.

If you receive this, you may be satisfied that your grandmother has heard of you, as I have received every one of yours. Why yours should come, and ours be stopped or retarded, is inconceivable.

I could write on this subject all night, but as it is so late, and Philip must carry this to town by eight to-morrow, I will conclude for the present, after telling you that I wrote to you, directed to Turin, Oct. 16, 19, 25, and to Florence, Nov. 2, 11, 16, and thither, *par Paris*, 19th and 29th. How I do hope you have got some at least! Adieu, adieu!

2763. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Dec. 16, 1790.

I am still infinitely distressed about your receiving no letters from England, and still ignorant whether you have yet received any. Your last was from Florence of the 16th of last month, and you promised to write again immediately; but the strong westerly winds (which on Sunday night blew a tempest, and broke off a considerable branch of my beautiful ivied walnut-tree at Strawberry) have prevented (and I hope nothing else has) our receiving any letters from the Continent. My best consolation has been from Miss Penn, who tells me her brother, now at Florence, was some time without letters, but then did receive them. May this have been your case—you may ask him. I desired her to write to him to acquaint you that Miss Seton and I have received all your letters regularly, consequently your grandmother has *not* been alarmed.

In this suspense I only write, that if our letters do find

Letter 2763.—Not in C.

passage to you, you may have no interval; though till I hear they do, I cannot write comfortably. Should any French have stopped them, surely they must have discovered by this time that they might as well have a curiosity about letters to Abyssinia! But how unpleasant that you cannot not only hear the common chit-chat of your own country, but receive no account of your own private affairs. You perhaps do not yet know that your house is let for six months at seven guineas a week. I called on Mr. Cambridge on Sunday evening; his son George[1], as well as I, have sent you notice of it, and the latter too of what I did not know, that he has sold Mr. Berry's horse. If you have received our letters, these will be unnecessary repetitions; but I want so much to give such satisfactory information, that I shall not spare *redits* till I am sure you are informed.

In mine of last week I was so confounded at your disappointment, that I forgot to give you, as you desired, the direction to Mrs. D. It is 'Aux soins de Messieurs Mellish et de Visme, à Lisbon.' I have heard from her thence; she had a passage but of seven days.

I came to town yesterday purely on your account, and return to-morrow. Cliveden was this morning secured to you and your sister in form.

Poor Lady Herries has lost the use of her limbs, and is at Bath in a melancholy way. I called on Mrs. Buller last night, and unluckily found seven persons who had dined with her: so you may imagine my visit was short.

Lord Bute has had a fall from his own cliff of twenty-eight feet, sprained his ankle, and broke the little bone of it, but, though seventy-seven, is recovering.

The opposition seem very temperate and tame, and the court's majorities are great. The three Garters were given

[1] The Rev. George Owen Cambridge, afterwards Archdeacon of Middlesex.

away yesterday to the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, the Duke of Leeds, and Lord Chatham. All this perhaps you will learn earlier from our newspapers. Of private news I do not know a tittle, but I would try once more to acquaint you with your own affairs by the common post. If none of these succeed, I will try some other channel, for I cannot bear your living ignorant of all that concerns you. I will write round by Russia, and beg the Empress to make it a condition of peace, that the Grand Signor shall send a zebecque to Leghorn with my letters. Adieu! for the present.

P.S. I am sorry I was so much in the right, when I endeavoured to dissuade your journey, from the various inconveniences I foresaw, though I own loss of letters was not one of the number.

2764. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Friday night, Dec. 17, 1790.

My letters set out on the back of one another. I wish I could know that any one of them, but that at Lyons, had reached you! I sent off the eleventh from London this morning, but here is a new and great distress! Last week I received your first from Florence, with an account of your shocking disappointment in finding no letters from England there or at Turin, though all yours have come regularly to me and Miss Seton, and I conclude to others, so you may be satisfied that your grandmother has been under no alarm about you. Your Florentine letter promised another, in which I trusted I should learn that your letters had followed you, as Mr. Penn's have done him; but, alas! if you have sent such a letter, I shall probably never receive

Letter 2764.—Not in C.

it, for a French packet from Calais to Dover sunk in the great storm on Tuesday with all the crew, thirty persons, and I suppose the mails too, for the English packet escaped at the same time, and yet I have no letter, which I must have had to-night, for Kirgate followed me by the evening coach. One great consolation he has brought me, a permission to send *this* in Lord Hervey's packet, which sets me to writing with confidence.

In this morning's letter I have told you that in the uncertainty of any of my letters reaching you, I must till I know they do use many repetitions. The most material are that your house in Audley Street is let for six months at seven guineas a week; and Mr. G. Cambridge has sold Mr. Berry's horse. Cliveden was secured to you both in form yesterday morning.

The Parliament has been moderate, and the court's majorities considerable. The chief difficulty is whether Hastings's trial is to proceed, and that point is not yet settled. The Duke of Montrose is Master of the Horse; Mr. W. Grenville a peer; the Duke of Saxe-Gotha, the Duke of Leeds, and Lord Chatham have got the three vacant Garters. This kind of articles that are in all newspapers I shall not send you, if I learn that you see the papers.

Poor Lady Herries has lost the use of her limbs, and is very ill at Bath. Mrs. Damer had a passage of only seven days; her direction is 'Aux soins de Messieurs Mellish et de Visme, à Lisbon.'

The famous letter, and another to the same purport, of which we were told the night before you set out, is discovered to be a forgery, but the writer not found out, yet supposed to be the very person who repeated it to us; but do not write this back to England, nor mention it where you are, I beg.

Mrs. Siddons is playing again to crowded houses.

For my own history, I am still resident here. We have had several beautiful days, a vast deal of rain and high winds, but scarce any cold. Richmond is still full, and will be so till after Christmas. The Duke of Clarence is there, and every night at Mrs. Bouverie's, Lady Di's, at home, or at the Duke of Queensberry's, with suppers that finish at twelve. I have been at three, but I do not think seventy-three just suited to twenty-five, and therefore have excused myself from as many, and believe I shall settle in town before New Year's Day, though the hours in London, even of old folks, are not half so reasonable as those of this young Prince, who never drinks or games, and is extremely good humoured and well bred.

If I have anything more to tell you before Sunday morning, when this must go to town for Tuesday's post, I will add it; but still trusting that you may at last have received my former letters, I have been very brief on what I have mentioned in them. One thing I must repeat with emphasis: I implore you not to return through France, especially as Flanders is now resettled. I as earnestly beseech you to be in England by the end of September. I never shall forget the storm which you so narrowly escaped going to Dieppe, and this last Tuesday has been still more tremendous. Torrents in Italy too! For France, the horrors increase. The son of a friend of mine called on me yesterday; he is of Cambridge, and told me that two lords of his acquaintance had the curiosity to go to France this summer, and he was on the point of going with them, but was prevented. At Lyons they were seized for spies, and had the rope about their necks; but a man of letters coming by, they explained themselves to him in Latin, which they had not been able to do sufficiently in French, and he saved them. I know how well you speak Latin and French too, but as *the benefit of clergy* is so lately taken away in that country, I beg you

will never set your foot in it, but, seriously and most seriously, spare me more alarms! I shall have no tranquillity till you are safe in England again. I know I have no right to ask you to sacrifice your own satisfactions to mine; but mine are not the sole; yourselves have been suffering for what you thought your grandmother must have felt on your accounts. The present state of France, and surely it is not mending, has already caused you many inconveniences. At Rouen you could get nothing but paper—it is ten times worse now. What if you should not be able to proceed from want of assistance from bankers, who could come to relieve you?—nay, should we be sure of getting your letters? Oh, ponder these things, and listen to me at least for your return! I will not look back, but I must look forward, while I am on earth, to study your happiness and security. That cannot be long—but should I fail before your return, who will be equally active for your service? You have been so kind as to tell me I am your true friend; should I be so if I did not labour to prevent dangers for you, and did not warn you of them? I write so freely and warmly, as sure of your receiving this, though not certain I shall have leave to make use of the same conveyance often. Cultivate Lord Hervey; he may perhaps allow you to receive Miss Seton's and my letters in his packets—but keep that a secret. I could write all night, but surely you must see that my fears are neither ill-founded nor selfish. Good night! may Heaven preserve you.

Saturday night.

I have nothing to add but that I am persuaded the mail is lost, for I have no letter, and have written to Miss Seton to acquaint her with my suspicion that she may tranquillize your grandmother. This is a vile sheet of paper and sucks up the ink, and I have not time to transcribe it.

Poor Lady Douglas (Lady Frances Scott) was brought to bed ten days ago; is most dangerously ill, and this morning's message said the fever no better.

I fear a particular passage to Miss Agnes in answer to her kind scrap must have been amongst the letters whose fate is still unknown to me—but all mine are equally to both, as Cliveden is; and for fear of mistakes or your removal, I make the address of this double.

2765. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Dec. 20, 1790, very late at night.

This being a duplicate or rather a codicil to one that goes away to-morrow from the Secretary's office in Lord Hervey's packet, I do not put any numero to it, and as it must go hence to-morrow very early by the coach, I write a few lines just to contradict what I have said about lost letters in the letter you will receive from our minister.

The French packet that was said to be lost on Tuesday last, and which did hang out signals of distress, was saved, but did not bring any letters; but three Flemish mails that were due are arrived, and did bring letters, and, to my inexpressible joy, two from you of the 22nd and 29th of last month, telling me that you have received as far as No. 4 and 5 of mine. I am ashamed to say that with this there were *eight* more arrived or on the road. Yours received to-night are 10 and 11. I conclude Miss Seton will receive one or two from one of you to-morrow at farthest, as I am sorry to say she has one from me this morning I suppose, lamenting the loss of the French packet. Thank all the stars in Herschel's telescope, or beyond its reach, that our correspondence is out of the reach of France and all its ravages!

I truly have been in such distress and confusion about

your finding no letters at Florence, that I have scarce thought or talked of anything else but contrivances to remedy that disaster. Your two letters have made me quite easy, and I shall fall into our natural commerce again.

Your letters, though I still maintain longer than I wish you to write, contain everything I like to know except the last article, but the uppermost in my thoughts, your drinking whey from having been overheated by your journey. I hope your next will be as minute on that article, and as satisfactory as your account of Miss Agnes, which doubles the pleasure the arrival of these letters has given me, and of which I despaired. Should any feverishness remain I beg you to have recourse to five grains of James's powder. I rejoice that Mr. Berry continues so well.

After a deluge of letters for some days, I have not left myself a tittle to tell you. Nay, doubting whether any would reach you, but hoping that some at least would, I have repeated three or four times every tittle I wanted you to know.

Thank you a million of times for all your details about yourselves! When even the apprehension of any danger disquiets me so much, judge whether I do not interest myself in every particular of your pleasures and amusements! Florence was my delight, as it is yours; but, I don't know how, I wish you did not like it quite so much! and, after the gallery, how will any silver-penny of a gallery look? Indeed, for your Boboli, which I thought horrible even fifty years ago, before *shepherds* had seen the star of taste in the *west*, and glad tidings were proclaimed to their flocks, I do think there is not an acre on the banks of the Thames that should vail the bonnet to it.

Of Mr. Burke's book, if I have not yet told you my opinion, I do now; that it is one of the finest compositions

in print. There is reason, logic, wit, truth, eloquence, and enthusiasm, in the brightest colours. That it has given a mortal stab to sedition, I believe and hope; because the fury of the Brabanters—whom, however, as having been aggrieved, I pitied and distinguish totally from the savage Gauls—and the unmitigated and execrable injustices of the latter, have made almost any state preferable to such anarchy and desolation, that increases every day.

Admiring thus, as I do, I am very far from subscribing to the extent of almost all Mr. Burke's principles. The work, I have no doubt, will hereafter be applied to support very high doctrines; and to you I will say, that I think it an *Apocrypha* that, in many a council of bishops, will be added to the *Old* Testament. Still, such an Almanzor was wanting at this crisis; and his foes show how deeply they are wounded, by their abusive pamphlets. Their Amazonian allies, headed by Kate Macaulay and the virago Barbauld, whom Mr. Burke calls our *poissardes*, spit their rage at eighteenpence a head, and will return to Fleet Ditch, more fortunate in being forgotten than their predecessors, immortalized in the *Dunciad*.

I must now bid you good night; and night it is, to the tune of morning. Adieu, all three!

P.S. I am glad you did not get a Parmesan *Otranto*[1]. A copy is come so full of faults, that it is not fit to be sold here.

2766. To Joseph Cooper Walker.

Sir, Strawberry Hill, Dec. 21, 1790.

Though I have had the gout in my hand for some time and am not able to write myself, I will not delay any

Letter 2765.—[1] An edition printed at Parma by Bodoni.

Letter 2766. — Not in C.; now first printed from original (probably in Kirgate's handwriting) in possession of Messrs. Maggs Bros.

longer thanking you for your last favours, particularly for your notes on two publications of mine, though, as I have told you, Sir, I am too old to think of making any additions to them. For my tragedy, you do it too much honour, and give yourself a great deal too much trouble about it, and if the bookseller will print it, I had rather he printed it faultily, than that you should take the pains to correct the press. I much approve of your scheme for promoting painting in Ireland, and heartily wish success both to your plan and to the art there. Indeed, as your country seems in earnest in setting about improving and aggrandizing itself, and has already done itself honour by its public buildings, I have no doubt but painting will flourish as much as architecture.

The college for old maids is a very benevolent idea, but I am not well enough acquainted with Ireland to judge whether it is a practicable one.

Dr. Young's treatise is very ingenious indeed, and his arguments very satisfactory. I never did believe that Gothic architecture was of Moorish or Saracenic origin, being very unlike to the drawings I have seen from buildings of either people; still less do I attribute Gothic to the Saxons, who never invented anything but a barbarous mode of corrupting language.

I have thought that the intersection of regular arches may have suggested the idea of pointed ones, whenever or wherever that form was first adopted. Dr. Young's defence of its strength pleases me extremely, and I wish his arguments may recommend it as successfully as I think they ought to do.

One opinion I have, which is, that the florid Gothic owes its beautiful improvements to England alone; nor do I know parallel samples but in some few cathedrals in France in provinces that were subject to us. Had the style originated

Warren Hastings
from a painting by Tilly Kettle.

in France, that nation is too apt to be partial to its own inventors not to have spread the taste more diffusively.

2767. To Robert Berry.

Dear Sir, Strawberry Hill, Dec. 23, 1790.

If your letter did not give me so much pleasure from many particulars, I should be vexed at your thinking it necessary to thank me for an affection by which I am certainly by far the greatest gainer. At my great age, and decrepit as I am, what could happen so fortunate to me in the dregs of life as to meet with you and your daughters, and them very pretty young women, universally admired, and all the more for their virtues, sweet tempers, knowledge, and such funds of good sense, as make them company for the most sensible of both sexes, as you constantly have seen? Was not this an acquisition to value as I do, when you allowed me to enjoy so much of your society? Indeed, I sometimes reproach myself, and say, Did not I engross too much of their time, and may not my blind self-love have contributed to deprive me of that blessing? Yes, I know I was unreasonable, and may never be so happy again! Can I at past seventy-three depend on a year's life? I am not so vainly sanguine. Nay, can I be so unjust as to wish to shorten their stay in a country to which they are so partial? Yet human nature, though worn out, cannot with all its reason, philosophy, and what is much stronger in me, friendship, put itself so entirely out of the question, as to eradicate every hope that they may have a wish to return home; though you alarm me, Sir, when you speak hypothetically of being in England by the annual period of your setting out—should there be an *if* in the case, I doubt there will be no *if* for me. Forgive my returning your

Letter 2767.—Not in C.

favour by this melancholy strain. I am too weak to command myself, and the best advice I can give to your daughters is to gratify their own, and so reasonable, inclinations, and ascribe my grief to what I should think myself and would allow to be dotage, if there were one spark of ridiculous love in my affection for your daughters, and which is equal for both. I am most happy in the accounts you and they give of their health and looks.

On reading what I have been writing, I perceive I had omitted half my words. In fact, your letter arrived at nine to-night, and affected me so much that I began to answer it the instant I had read it, and have written in great precipitation. I will now turn to subjects less interesting, as indeed to me almost all other subjects are. I will only first say, that I know your daughters have friendships in Swisserland that may detain them; but on that point I most assuredly prefer your safeties to the whole mass of my personalities, and implore again and again that you will cross to Flanders, and avoid total France.

The Duchess of Argyle died the day before yesterday. She had kept her bed for some days.

Poor Lady Douglas has been twice thought out of danger, but is relapsed and in extreme danger. This would make another gap in my society: she is very sensible and amiable.

Thursday, 23rd.

My head was so confused last night, and I have made so many interlineations, that I can scarce read it myself—if you cannot, you will have no loss.

When I went to bed, the wind was very high, yet I got to sleep. At half an hour after four I was waked by such volleys of thunder, lightning, hail, and then a torrent of rain, as I believe was never known in this temperate clime two days before Christmas. I thought my little castle

would be crushed under the bombardment. The lightning darted down the chimney, through the crevices of the shutters and the linen curtains of my bed. Some of my servants and others of the village got [out] of their beds—yet I find no mischief done here, nor yet anywhere else; and with this *no* accident I must supply part of my letter for want of more important news. The debates in Parliament on the Spanish Peace and the new taxes have produced some long days, but less heat than ever, and hitherto most decided majorities. About Hastings's trial[1] they are more puzzled than angry.

I propose settling in town the beginning of next week, and after the holidays shall probably be less sterile.

Give me leave to finish with an observation, that for three, not new, travellers, you seem not to choose the most judicious months for your journeys: the coldest and the hottest cannot both be the most suitable. You went to Florence in November, and propose setting out for Swisserland towards the middle of June—surely May would be preferable!

Adieu! dear Sir. I shall always be happy to hear from you, if without thanks. Your daughters seem to write too much for their delicate breasts—why not take it by turns?

Yours most cordially,

H. W.

2768. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Jan. 2, 1791.

I doubt the letter I wrote last week to Mr. B. was both confused and illegible—for the latter, no matter. The truth

[1] Parliamentary discussions took place as to whether Hastings's impeachment was or was not terminated by the dissolution of Parliament.

Letter 2768.—Not in C.

is, I had got the gout in my left hand ; and whenever a fit comes, I suppose it may be my last ; and the consequence of that idea was the thought that I might never see you more ! I had just been delighting myself with having settled Cliveden—then came Mr. B.'s letter, which after relating your plan, and mentioning your intention of being at home by the period of your setting out, talked of a visit to Switzerland, which I dreaded would detain you, and then said *all subject to correction and alteration.* Those words went to my heart, as if threatening prolongation of your term, though perhaps meaning only the intervening time—in short, I quite despaired !

I have had the gout in my hand for above a fortnight now ; it mends very slowly indeed—but I have been much worse with the rheumatism, which joined it, and still possesses that whole arm and shoulder. I have been quite immovable, but by two servants ; and this is the first day I have been able to attempt writing to you. I have not had much pain but in being put to bed and in being taken up. I have no fever, my appetite quite perfect, and my sleep so excellent, that I do little else but sleep. The exact state of my case is, that I do not recover so fast as I used to do, which is not at all surprising at my age ; nor perhaps so soon as I should in town ; but I dread a relapse ; and besides, as my greatest danger always lies in the weakness of my breast, I am safer here, where I see nobody, and cannot be made to talk. I have written all this in my lap without stopping, so you may be sure I am not very bad—I could not have done as much yesterday, but certainly am better to-day than I have been at all. Now I will rest.

Sunday evening.

Having written enough with my own hand to convince you that I am not very ill, I will, for ease, let Kirgate

continue. I received yours, No. 12, of December the 6th, two days ago, a long time coming! However, if this is as slow, you will be pretty sure that I am well when you receive it.

I am glad you are going to Pisa; Florence is too cold for you. You divert me with the account of *the Charming's* brother being a democrat: upon my word, the transition from an English Catholic nonjuror to a French leveller is Pindaric enough. Still it does not look well for the National Assembly when their proselytes fly the country as well as those they persecute. That synod has lately ordered 500,000*l.* sterling to be issued to the famished in the provinces. They ask for *bread*, and they have given them *paper*. They might as well have sent the useless clergy,

And helped to bury those they helped to starve.

The Duchess of Biron is returned to London, where, with her spirit, I am sure she is better than at Paris: she was at the play there, and a song applicable to the Queen being encored as a compliment, and the Duchess applauding with her fan on the box, a shower of apples flew at her, and with them a penknife that hardly missed her. She took it away with her, and the next morning sent it to La Fayette, and desired he would lay it on the altar of liberty, and then came away.

I have little or no English news for you. Lady Douglas, after so many struggles, will live. It is declared that Mrs. Child[1] is going to marry Lord Ducie; as they are both fifty, nobody can have any objection, if they have not themselves. She gives him ten thousand pounds; and they are

[1] Sarah, daughter of Paul Jodrell, and widow of Robert Child, of Osterley, Middlesex; m. (June 18, 1791) Francis Reynolds-Moreton (1739–1808), third Baron Ducie; d. 1793.

to live on her twenty thousand pounds a year from the shop, and she reserves in her own power 70,000*l.* that she has saved; my Lord laying up his own estate for his two sons[2].

Monday, 3rd.

I choose to finish with my own hand, that you may not think me worse: indeed I am better, but the amendment is very slow; I have no actual pain at all, nor any more gout coming; but the swelling of my left hand remains, and the elbow and shoulder are still lame. This is the whole truth.

Lady Mount-Edgcumbe and Madame de la Villebague have been here from Richmond this morning, and says Mrs. Siddons has suffered so much by her late exertions that she has relapsed, and they think must quit the stage. They told me nothing else, and so I will conclude. My next week's letter will, I trust, be more satisfactory. Adieu!

2769. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Strawberry Hill, Thursday evening, Jan. 6, 1791.

I have been ill for three weeks, Madam, with some gout and a good deal of rheumatism, and this is the first day in which I have been able to walk (with help) from my bedchamber to the blue room: but, as I hate to tire anybody with common habitual complaints, or to trouble them to inquire after me, I have kept my ails to myself as much as I could. I do certainly mend, though very slowly: no wonder, at my age, and with such a frame! Still I have great cause to be thankful, for though the husk is as slight as the shell of a paper nautilus, the core is of iron-wood.

[2] The Hon. Thomas and the Hon. Augustus John Reynolds-Moreton. The former succeeded his father, and was created Earl of Ducie.

My appetite (no voracious one) never fails ; and for sleep, it is at my command, as if I had a guardian angel (poor angel!) always at my elbow, for I have nothing to do, day or night, but to shut my eyes, and Ariel seals them ; however, he has a good deal of time to himself, for I indulge myself and him in that sinecure for half the four-and-twenty hours.

Such having been my Christmas gambols, Madam, it is impossible I can have anything to entertain you. I mean, if I can with safety, to be conveyed to London next week ; but I am a great coward about relapses, and never lay in a stock of patience but for the first edition of a fit, and therefore shall not be too precipitate.

Lady Douglas will live ; but at present the disorder has fallen on her eyes, but I hope not desperately.

This has been an effort, and now I must rest.—Here, Ariel!

2770. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday, Jan. 9, 1791.

I am unfortunate, for when I want most to satisfy you by writing with my own hand, I am least able to do so comfortably, for the rheumatism is got into my right elbow too, and nothing can be more awkward than my writing at all. You may be assured now, that though my disorder began with a little gout, it is a decided rheumatism, which I think much worse, as it is not so sure of quitting its hold. My best prospect is being carried to town, but I do not think I could yet bear a carriage. All I have done yet is to walk with a little help from the red bedchamber to the blue room —that is, down three steps ; and that journey contains my daily and whole history.

Now I have satisfied you that my handwriting is alive, it

Letter 2770.—Not in C.

shall act by proxy; but it will not be like a king that says a few words, and then tells the assembly that his Chancellor will deliver the rest; now it happens that Chancellor Kirgate has nothing to deliver, for he nor his Majesty know a word of news.

I am glad you are pleased with your lodgings at Pisa, and think you shall like the company. It is a novelty to me that you have put up some learned men there; Mr. Pinkerton, who is of no great authority with you, has often talked to me of the mighty science and learning of the Italians. They may live at Pisa for what I know; Mr. Parsons[1] was out of luck to live so long at Florence, and be forced to go to search for the wise men in Germany. I shall rest at present, and finish this to-morrow evening.

Monday, 10th.

I try to write a little myself, and you see I can, but it shall be only to tell you my exact case, in which I have not deceived you. It is most clearly rheumatism, all over my left hand, arm, and shoulder, which I do not find mend at all, and for the last two nights the right elbow has been bad too, though not near so helpless as the other. I rise every day and sit in the blue room till eleven at night; but the weather is most unfortunate for me, either tempests or rains—the meadows quite overflowed. I will undoubtedly be carried to town the moment it is possible.

I hope I shall be able to give you a better account next week; and that shows my confidence that you will be wishing for a better account, I mean, all three. Adieu, all three!

[1] A *dilettante* poet.

2771. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 15, 1791.

If I had not promised to write again this post, I should have been disinclined to it, for I cannot give you a better account of myself. The first amendment I perceived was on Tuesday morning last, and I really thought the worst over, but after dinner the gout came into my right hand, and has taken possession of that whole arm too, while the left hand and arm is so very little better that I have scarce any use from either. In this most uncomfortable state I did determine to come to town, and here I actually arrived yesterday: I bore the journey very well, and had a better night after it than I had had for some time; so that probably the warmth of London has contributed a little already, and may in time do more. You see I do not make the case better than it is—danger there is none—but the case of the sufferer is not much mitigated by that consideration.

Sunday, 16th.

Though I have had a good night, my journal does not yet improve; not one of my limbs mends, and I have the additional dread of the gout coming into one of my knees. In this deplorable state you may imagine I scarce see anybody, nor can have anything almost to talk of but my suffering helpless self. It is vexatious to give you such an account, but I am sure you had rather receive this true than a fictitious one; besides, you may reasonably conclude that by the time you receive this letter there may be some considerable amendment in me.

Yesterday I received your No. 14, of the 22nd of last month, with an account of your Pisan life and acquaintance; just what I wanted to know, yet you call it a dull detail:

Letter 2771.—Not in C.

think, then, what I send you in return, the journal of a sick room! Thank you for the memoirs of the Grifonis, and for Miss Agnes's horse. Now I will bate a little.

Sunday evening.

I do think I begin to use a finger or two of my left hand, which is a great event in this room, as I admit no others. The Edgcumbes and Johnstones and a few more have called here this morning, but I could not see them. Lady Mary and Mr. Churchill are almost the only persons I do receive, and Jerningham I have seen once. The town, they say, is quite empty, but probably will be fuller by Tuesday, for the Queen's Birthday. I shall leave a little of my paper for my progress to-morrow, if I make any: in any case this bulletin is long enough already.

Monday, 17th.

I am reduced to make bonfires for negatives; the gout is not come into my knee, and I must rejoice that I have no other matter of triumph, as I have not recovered one joint in either arm or hand; so I will finish this letter, as I shall have certainly nothing better to tell you by this post. Adieu!

Tuesday morning, 18th.

I just add one line before this goes to the post to say that I have had another very good night, and yet, alas! I do not find any amendment; what time may do I do not know.

2772. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 20, 1791.

I have indeed, Madam, been much worse since I gave your Ladyship the last account of myself; and that much worse is indeed very far from being much better. I have the gout, or rheumatism, or both in every joint of both

arms and hands, and for three days could neither open nor attend to the prologue you were so good as to send me, and which I believe I shall admire whenever my head is clear enough to know what I do like. I have no dangerous symptoms, but here I lie, balloted between pain, extreme weakness, and some cordage of a constitution that still ties the skeleton together.

2773. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Saturday, Jan. 22, 1791.

I have been most unwillingly forced to send you such bad accounts of myself by my two last letters; but, as I could not conceal all, it was best to tell you the whole truth. Though I do not know that there was any real danger, I could not be so blind to my own age and weakness as not to think that, with so much gout and fever, the conclusion might very probably be fatal; and therefore it was better you should be prepared for what might happen. The danger appears to be entirely over: there seems to be no more gout to come. I have no fever, have a very good appetite, and sleep well. Mr. Watson, who is all tenderness and attention, is persuaded to-day that I shall recover the use of my left hand; of which I despaired much more than of the right, as having been seized three weeks earlier. Emaciated and altered I am incredibly, as you would find were you ever to see me again. But this illness has dispelled all visions! and, as I have so little prospect of passing another happy autumn, I must wean myself from whatever would embitter my remaining time by disappointments.

Your No. 15 came two days ago, and gives me the pleasure of knowing that you both are the better for riding, which I hope you will continue. I am glad, too, that you are pleased with your Duchess of Fleury and your Latin

professor; but I own, except your climate and the six hundred camels[1], you seem to me to have met with no treasure which you might not have found here without going twenty miles: and even the camels, according to Soame Jenyns's spelling[2], were to be had from Carrick and other places.

I doubt you apply Tully *de Amicitia* too favourably: at least, I fear there is no paragraph that countenances seventy-three and twenty-seven.

I wonder you have not heard oftener from Lisbon. She[3] seems perfectly well, and to have settled her return, which is to be through Spain: after the 20th of February our letters are to be directed to Madrid. She is in great distress, and I heartily pity her, about Fidele[4], which seems dying.

Monday, the 24th.

I think I shall give you pleasure by telling you that I am very sure now of recovering from the present fit. It has almost always happened to me, in my considerable fits of the gout, to have one critical night that celebrates its departure: at the end of two different fits I each time slept eleven hours. Morpheus is not quite so young nor so generous now; but, with the interruption of a few minutes, he presented me with eight hours last night: and thence I shall date my recovery.

I shall now begin to let in a little company; and, as the Parliament will meet in a week, my letters will probably not be so dull as they have been; nor shall I have occasion, nor be obliged, to talk so much of myself, of which I am sure others must be tired, when I am so much tired myself.

Letter 2773.—[1] Camels were, and are still, bred at San Rossore near Pisa. They were introduced into Tuscany in 1622 by the Grand Duke Ferdinand II.

[2] See letter to the Countess of Upper Ossory of July 23, 1775.

[3] Mrs. Damer.

[4] Her dog, which died at Lisbon.

Tuesday, the 25th.

I have had another good night, and clearly do mend. I even hope that in a fortnight I shall be able to write a few lines with my own hand, which makes me less solicitous to lengthen my letters now, especially in this interval of Parliament when nothing happens.

Old Mrs. French[5] is dead at last, and I am on the point of losing, or have lost, my oldest acquaintance and friend, George Selwyn, who was yesterday at the extremity. These misfortunes, though they can be so but for a short time, are very sensible to the old; but him I really loved, not only for his infinite wit, but for a thousand good qualities. Lady Cecilia Johnstone was here yesterday. I said much for you, and she as much to you. The Gunnings are still playing the fool, and perhaps somebody with them; but I cannot tell you the particulars now. Adieu!

2774. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Jan. 28, 1791.

You and Lord Ossory have been so very good to me, Madam, that I must pay you the first tribute of my poor reviving fingers—I believe they never will be their own men again; but as they have lived so long in your Ladyship's service, they shall show their attachment to the last, like Widdrington on his stumps. I have had another and grievous memento, the death of poor Selwyn[1]! His end was lovely, most composed and rational. From eight years old I had known him intimately without a cloud between us; few knew him so well, and consequently few knew so

[5] An Irish lady who during the latter part of her life had a house at Hampton Court. *Berry.*—Perhaps identical with the 'old Brutus' of previous letters.

Letter 2774.—[1] Selwyn died in Cleveland Row, St. James's, on Jan. 25.

well the goodness of his heart and nature. But I will say no more—*Mon Chancelier vous dira le reste.*—No, my Chancellor shall put an end to the session, only concluding, as Lord Bacon would have done for King James, with an apologue, 'His Majesty's recovery has turned the corner, and exceeding the old fable, has proved that the stomach can do better without the limbs than they could without him.'—Adieu, Madam.

2775. To Miss Mary Berry.

Saturday, Jan. 29, 1791.

Voici de ma propre écriture! the best proof that I am recovering, though not rapidly, which is not the march of my time of life. For these last six days I have mended more than I expected. My left hand, the first seized, is the most dilatory, and of which I have least hopes. The rheumatism, that I thought so clear and predominant, is so entirely gone, that I now rather think it was hussar-gout attacking in flying squadrons the outposts. No matter which, very ill I was; and you might see what I thought of myself: nor can I stand many such victories. My countenance was so totally altered, that I could not trace it myself. Its outlines have returned to their posts, though with deep gaps. This is a true picture, and too long an one of self; and too hideous for a bracelet. Apropos, your sweet Miss Foldson, I believe, is painting portraits of *all* our Princesses, to be sent to all the Princes upon earth; for, though I have sent her several written duns, she has not deigned even to answer one in writing. I don't know whether Mrs. Buller is not appointed Royal Academician too; for, though I desired the *Charming* who was to dine with her that day, to tell her, above a week ago, that I should be glad to see her, she has not taken the least

notice of it. Mr. Batt, ditto; who was at Cambridge's when I was at the worst, and knew so, has not once inquired after me, in town or country. So you see you have carried off your friends from me as well as yourselves: and it is not *them* I regret; or rather, in fact, I outlive all my friends! Poor Selwyn is gone, to my sorrow; and no wonder Ucalegon feels it! He has left about 30,000*l.* to Mademoiselle Fagniani; 20,000*l.* of which, if she has no children, to go to those of Lord Carlisle: the Duke of Queensberry residuary legatee.

Old French has died as foolishly as she lived, and left 6,000*l.* to you don't know whom; but to be raised out of her judicious collection of trumpery pictures, &c.

Pray, delight in the following story: Caroline Vernon, *fille d'honneur,* lost t'other night 200*l.* at faro, and bade Martindale mark it up. He said he had rather have a draft on her banker. 'Oh, willingly;' and she gave him one. Next morning he hurried to Drummond's, lest all her money should be drawn out. 'Sir,' said the clerk, 'would you receive the contents immediately?' 'Assuredly.' 'Why, Sir, have you read the note?' Martindale took it; it was, 'Pay to the bearer two hundred blows, well applied.' The nymph tells the story herself; and yet I think the clerk had the more humour of the two.

The Gunninghiad draws to a conclusion. The General, a few weeks ago, to prove the equality of his daughter to any match, literally put into the newspapers, that he himself is the thirty-second descendant in a line from Charlemagne—*oui vraiment!* Yet he had better have, like Prior's Madam,

> To cut things short, gone up to Adam.

However, this Carlovingian hero does not allow that the letters are forgeries, and rather suspects the novelist, his

lady[1], for the authoress; and if she is, probably Miss Charlemagne is not quite innocent of the plot: though she still maintains that her mother-in-law elect did give her much encouragement; which, considering her Grace's conduct about her children, is not the most incredible part of this strange story. I have written this at twice, and will now rest.

Sunday evening.

I wish that complaining of people for abandoning me were an infallible recipe for bringing them *back*! but I doubt it will not do in acute cases. To-day, a few hours after writing the latter part of this, appeared Mr. Batt. He asked many pardons, and I easily forgave him; for the *mortification* was not begun. He asked much after you both. I had a crowd of visits besides; but they all come past two o'clock, and sweep one another away before any can take root. My evenings are solitary enough, for I ask nobody to come; nor, indeed, does anybody's evening begin till I am going to bed. I have outlived daylight, as well as my cotemporaries. What have I not survived? The Jesuits and the monarchy of France, and both without a struggle! Semiramis seems to intend to add Constantinople to the mass of revolutions; but is not her permanence almost as wonderful as the contrary explosions! I wish—I wish we may not be actually flippancying ourselves into an embroil with that Ursa Major of the north pole. What a vixen little island are we, if we fight with the Aurora Borealis and Tippoo Saib at the end of Asia at the same time! You, damsels, will be like the end of the conundrum,

You've seen the man who saw these wondrous sights.

Monday evening.

I cannot finish this with my own hand, for the gout has

Letter 2775.—[1] Mrs. Gunning (*née* Minifie) wrote various novels.

returned a little into my right arm and wrist, and I am not quite so well as I was yesterday; but I had said my say, and have little to add. The town talk of a marriage between the Duchess of Rutland and Lord Paget[2], which is all I know of it. The Duchess of Gordon, t'other night, coming out of an assembly, said to Dundas, 'Mr. Dundas, you are used to speak in public; will you call my servant?'

Here I receive your long letter of the 7th, 9th, and 10th, which it is impossible for me to answer now: there is one part to which I wish to reply, but must defer till next post, by which time I hope to have recovered my own pen. You ask about the house of A.[3] You know I have no connection with them, nor any curiosity about them. Their relations and mine have been in town but four days, so I know little from them: Mrs. Grenville, to-day, told me the Duke proposes to continue the same life he used to lead, with a cribbage-table and his family. Everybody admires the youngest daughter's[4] person and understanding, but laments her want of education and control. Adieu! I will begin to write again myself as soon as I can.

2776. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Friday, Feb. 4, 1791.

Last post I sent you as cheerful a letter as I could, to convince you that I was recovering. This will be less gay; not because I have had a little return in both arms, but because I have much more pain in my mind than in my limbs. I see and thank you for all the kindness of your

[2] Henry William Paget (1768–1854), Lord Paget, eldest son of first Earl of Uxbridge (whom he succeeded in 1812); cr. Marquis of Anglesey in 1815. He was a well-known cavalry leader, and commanded the cavalry and horse artillery at Waterloo.

[3] Argyll.

[4] Lady Charlotte Susan Maria Campbell (1775–1861), m. 1. (1796) Colonel John Campbell, of Schawfield; 2. (1818) Rev. Edward Bury. She was remarkably beautiful.

intention; but, as it has the contrary effect from what you expect, I am forced, for my own peace, to beseech you not to continue a manœuvre that only tantalizes and wounds me. In your last you put together many friendly words to give me hopes of your return; but can I be so blind as not to see that they are vague words? Did you mean to return in autumn, would you not say so? would the most artful arrangement of words be so kind as those few simple ones? In fact, I have for some time seen how little you mean it; and, for your sakes, I cease to desire it. The pleasure you expressed at seeing Florence again, forgive me for saying, is the joy of sight merely; for can a little Italian town, and wretched Italian company, and travelling English lads and governors, be comparable to the choice of the best company of so vast a capital as London, unless you have taken an aversion to England? And your renewed transports at a less and still more insipid town, Pisa! These plainly told me your thoughts, which vague words cannot efface. You then dropped that you could let your London house till next Christmas, and then talked of a visit to Switzerland, and since all this, Mrs. Damer has warned me not to expect you till *next spring*. I shall not; nor do I expect *that next* spring. I have little expected this next! My dearest Madam, I allow all my folly and unreasonableness, and give them up and abandon them totally. I have most impertinently and absurdly tried, for my own sake merely, to exact from two young ladies, above forty years younger than myself, a promise of sacrificing their rooted inclinations to my whims and satisfaction. But my eyes are opened, my reason is returned, I condemn myself; and I now make you but one request, which is, that, though I am convinced it would be with the most friendly and good-natured meaning possible, I do implore you not to try to help me to delude myself any more. You never knew half the shock it gave me when

I learned from Mr. Batt, what you had concealed from me, your fixed resolution of going abroad last October; and though I did in vain deprecate it—your coming to Twickenham in September, which I know, and from my inmost soul believe, was from mere compassion and kindness to me—yet it did aggravate my parting with you.

I would not repeat all this, but to prevail with you, while I do live, and while you do condescend to have any friendship for me, never to let me deceive myself. I have no right to inquire into your plans, views, or designs; and never will question you more about them. I shall deserve to be deluded if I do; but what you do please to say to me, I beg may be frank. I am, in every light, too weak to stand disappointment—now—I cannot be disappointed. You have a *firmness* that nothing shakes; and, therefore, it would be unjust to betray your good nature into any degree of insincerity. You do nothing that is not reasonable and right; and I am conscious that you bore a thousand times more from my self-love and vanity, than any other two persons but yourselves would have supported with patience so long. Be assured that what I say I think, feel, and mean: derange none of your plans for me. I now wish you to take no one step but what is conformable to your views, interests, and satisfaction. It would hurt me now to interfere with them: I reproach myself with having so ungenerously tried to lay you under any difficulties, and I approve your resolution in adhering steadily to your point. Two posts ago I hinted that I was weaning myself from the anxiety of an attachment to two persons that must have been so uneasy to them, and has ended so sorrowfully to myself; but that anxiety I restrict solely to the desire of your return. My friendship, had I years to live, could not alter or be shaken; and there is no kind of proof or instance of it that I will not give you both, while I have breath.

I have vented what I had at my heart, and feel relieved. Do not take ill a word I have said. Be assured I can love you as much as ever I did, and do; though I am no longer so unjust as to prefer my own satisfaction to yours. Here I drop the subject: before Tuesday, perhaps, I shall be able to talk on some other.

Monday, 7th.

Though the Parliament is met, and the town, they say, full, I have not heard a tittle of news of any sort: and yet my prison is a coffee-house in a morning, though I have been far from well this whole week. Yesterday and Saturday the gout was so painful in my right shoulder, that I could not stoop or turn round. To-day it is in my left elbow, and, I doubt, coming into my right foot: in short, it seems to be going its circle over again. I am not very sorry; sufferings reconcile one to parting with oneself. Poor Lady Herries has lost the use of her legs and arms and feet, and cannot walk alone.

One of our numerous tempests threw down Mrs. Damer's chimney last week, and it fell through her workshop; but fortunately touched none of her own works, and only broke two or three insignificant casts. I suppose you know she returns through Spain.

This minute I have heard that Lord Lothian's daughter, Lady Mary St. John, and daughter-in-law of Lady Di Beauclerk, died yesterday, having been delivered of a fine boy but the day before.

As you are curious to know the chief topic of conversation, it is the rival Opera Houses, neither of which are opened yet; both saying the other is falling down. Taylor has published a pamphlet that does not prove that the Marquis[1] is the most upright Chamberlain that ever dropped

Letter 2776.—[1] The Marquis of Salisbury, Lord Chamberlain.

from the skies, nor that the skies are quite true blue. Adieu! if no postscript to-morrow.—None.

2777. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 12, 1791.

I have received your *two* letters of January 17th and 24th with an account of your objects and plans; and the latter are very much what I expected, as before you receive this you will have seen by my last, No. 18. Indeed, you most kindly offer to break so far into your plan as to return at the beginning of next winter; but as that would, as you say, not only be a sacrifice, but risk your healths, can anything upon earth be more impossible than for me to accept or consent to such a sacrifice? Were I even in love with one of you, could I agree to it? and, being only a most zealous friend, do you think I will hear of it? Should I be a friend at all, if I wished you, for my sake, to travel in winter over mountains, or risk the storms at sea, that I have not forgotten when you went away? Can I desire you to derange a reasonable plan of economy, that would put you quite at your ease at your return? Have I any pretensions for expecting, still less for asking, such or any sacrifices? Have I interested myself in your affairs only to embarrass them?

The only point on which I can make a shadow of complaint, is your talking of what I did to assist your going, as a reason for your wishing to stay longer abroad; that would be *hard* indeed on *me*, and would be punishing me severely for doing you a trifling service! But when you have other and substantial reasons for not returning before spring twelvemonth, it is useless to talk on the other.

I do, in the most positive and solemn manner, refuse to

accept the smallest sacrifice of any part of your plan, but the single point that would be so *hard* on *me*. I will say not a word more on your return, and beg your pardon for having been so selfish as to desire it: my only request now is, that we may say no more about it. I am grieved that the great distance we are at must make me still receive letters about it for some weeks. I shall not forget how very unreasonable I have been myself; nor shall I try to forget it, lest I should be so silly again: but I earnestly desire to be totally silent on a subject that I have totally abandoned, and which it is not at all improbable I may never have occasion to renew.

Your other letter talks as kindly as possible on my illness, on which I am sure I have not deceived you, though I have talked too much on it; and on which, to satisfy you, I will still be particular. A fortnight ago I had every reason to think myself quite recovering, but in my left hand; then my pains returned for a week: they are again gone but in my left wrist, which to-day is uneasy enough. One comfort, however, I have, which is conviction that all my pains have been and are gouty, not rheumatic, which I dread much more as less likely to leave me. Though I am worse at night I am perfectly easy the moment I lie down in bed, where I go to sleep directly and often sleep five, nay, seven hours together without waking, though I sometimes sleep in the day too—and my stomach is as strong as ever. But there lies my whole strength, for no baby is weaker, nor less able to help himself. A lover, especially one of seventy-three, would not give you these details. But, though I have been unreasonable, and I suspect vain, I am not ridiculous.—Let us pass to better, that is, to any other subjects.

Miss Foldson is a prodigy of dishonest impertinence. I sent her word a week ago, by Kirgate, that I was glad

she had so much employment, but wished she would recollect that your pictures had been paid for these four months. She was such a fool as to take the compliment seriously, and to thank me for it, but verbally, and I have heard no more; so I suppose she thinks me as drunk with *her* honours as she is. I shall undeceive her, by sending for the pictures again, and telling her I can get twenty persons to finish them as well as she can; and so they could the likenesses, and, I doubt, better. What glories have befallen Mrs. Buller I know not, but I have not heard a word more of her!

I knew the Comte de Coigny in the year '66: he was then lively and jovial. I did not think he would turn out a writer, or even reader; but he was agreeable. I say nothing on France: you must know as much as I do, and probably sooner. I will only tell you, that my opinion is not altered in a tittle. What will happen I do not pretend to guess; but am thoroughly persuaded that the present system, if it can be called so, cannot take root. The flirts towards anarchy here have no effect at all. Horne Tooke before Christmas presented a saucy libel to the House of Commons as a petition on his election. The House contemptuously voted it only frivolous and vexatious, and disappointed him of a ray of martyrdom; but his fees, &c., will cost him three or four hundred pounds, which never go into a mob's calculation of the ingredients of martyrdom.

I believe I am rather worse than I know (and yet you need not be alarmed), for some of my relations, who never troubled themselves much about me, grow very attentive, and send me game and sweetmeats, which rather do me good, for they make me smile; and though this fit may be going, they are sure I cannot grow younger.

Monday morning, 14th.

I have a story to tell you, much too long to add to this; which I will send next post, unless I have leisure enough to-day, from people that call on me, to finish it to-day, having begun it last night; and in that case I will direct it to Miss Agnes.

Mr. Lysons the clergyman has just been here, and told me of a Welsh sportsman, a Jacobite I suppose, who has very recently had his daughter christened Louisa Victoria Maria Sobieski Foxhunter Moll Boycot[1]. The curate of the minister who baptized her confirmed the truth of it to Mr. L. When Belgiojoso, the Austrian minister, was here, and thought he could write English, he sent a letter to Miss Kennedy, a woman of the town, that began, 'My Kennedy Polly dear girl.' Apropos—and not much—pray tell me whether the Cardinal of York calls himself King; and whether James the Eighth, Charles the Fourth, or what?

Tuesday.

I have finished my narrative and it goes to-night with this. I have been without pain these two days. Adieu!

2778. To Miss Agnes Berry.

Feb. 13, 1791.

The following narrative, though only the termination of a legend of which you know the foregoing chapters, is too singular and too long to be added to my letter; and therefore, though you will receive two by the same post, you will not repine. In short, the Gunninghiad is completed—not by a marriage, like other novels of the Minifies. *Voici* how the *dénouement* happened.

Letter 2777.—[1] This young lady afterwards married the fourth Earl of Guilford.

Another supposed love-letter had come from the Marquis[1] within these few weeks; which was so improbable, that it raised more suspicions, and was more closely examined; and thence was discovered to have been both altered and interlined. On this the General sent *all* the letters down to the Marquis; desiring to be certified of their authenticity, or the contrary. I should tell you that all this has happened since the death of his sister[2]; who kept up the high tone, and said *her* brother was not a man to be trifled with. The Marquis immediately distinguished the two kinds; owned the few letters that disclaimed all inclination for Miss Charlemagne, disavowed the rest. Thence fell the General's wrath on his consort; of which I have told you.

However, the General and his ducal brother-in-law thought it expedient that Miss Charly's character should be cleared as far as possible; she still maintaining the prodigious encouragement she had received from the parents of her intended *sposo*. She was ordered to draw up a narrative, which should be laid before the Duke of Marlborough; and, if allowed by him, to be shown for her vindication. She obeyed; and her former assertions did not suffer by the new statement. But one singular circumstance was added: she confessed, ingenuous maid! that though she had not been able to resist so dazzling an offer, her heart was still her cousin's, the other Marquis[3].

Well! this narrative, after being laid before a confidential junto at Argyll House, was sent to Blenheim by the General, by his own groom.

Judge of the astonishment of the junto, when Carloman, almost as soon as was possible, laid before them a short letter from the Prince of Mindleheim, declaring how delighted he and his Princess had been at their son's having made

LETTER 2778.—[1] Of Blandford. Argyll.
[2] Elizabeth Gunning, Duchess of [3] The Marquis of Lorne.

choice of so *beautiful* and *amiable* a virgin for his bride; how greatly they had encouraged the match; and how chagrined they were, that, from the lightness and inconstancy of his temper, the proposed alliance was quite at an end. This wonderful acquittal of the damsel the groom deposed he had received in *half an hour* after his arrival at Blenheim; and he gave the most natural and unembarrassed account of all the stages he had made, going and coming.

You may still suspect, and so did some of the council, that every tittle of this report and of the letter were not gospel: though I own I thought the epistle not irreconcilable to other parts of the conduct of their Graces about their children. Still, I defy you to guess a thousandth part of the marvellous explanation of the mystery.

The first circumstance that struck was, that the Duke, in his own son's name, had forgotten the *d* in the middle. That was possible in the hurry of doing justice. Next, the wax was black; and nobody could discover for whom such illustrious personages were in mourning. Well; that was no proof one way or other. Unluckily, somebody suggested that Lord Henry Sp.[4] was in town, though to return the next day to Holland. A messenger was sent to him, though very late at night, to beg he would repair to Argyll House. He did: the letter was shown to him; he laughed, and said it had not the least resemblance to his father's hand. This was negative detection enough; but now comes the most positive and wonderful unravelling!

The next day the General received a letter from a gentleman, confessing that his wife, a friend of Miss Charly, had lately received from her a copy of a most satisfactory testimonial from the Duke of Marlborough in her favour (though, note, the narrative was not then gone to Blenheim);

[4] Lord Henry Spencer, the Duke's second son; Secretary of Legation at the Hague.

and begging the gentlewoman's husband would transcribe it, and send it to her, as she wished to send a copy to a friend in the country. The husband had done so, but had had the precaution to write at top *Copy*; and before the signature had written *signed*, M.—both which words Miss had erased, and then delivered the gentleman's identic transcript to the groom, to be brought back as from Blenheim: which the *steady* groom, on being examined anew, confessed; and that, being bribed, he had gone but one post and invented the rest.

You will now pity the poor General, who has been a dupe from the beginning, and sheds floods of tears; nay, has actually turned his daughter out of doors, as she is banished from Argyll House too: and Lady Charlotte, to her honour, speaks of her with the utmost indignation. In fact, there never was a more extraordinary tissue of effrontery, folly, and imposture.

It is a strange but not a miraculous part of this strange story, that Gunnilda is actually harboured by, and lodges with, the old Duchess[5] in Pall Mall, the grandmother of whom she has miscarried, and who was the first that was big with her. You may depend on the authenticity of this narrative, and may guess from whom I received all the circumstances, day by day; but pray, do not quote me for that reason, nor let it out of your hands, nor transcribe any part of it. The town knows the story confusedly, and a million of false readings there will be; but, though you know it exactly, do not send it back hither. You will, perhaps, be diverted by the various ways in which it will be related. Yours, &c.

EGINHART, Secretary to Charlemagne
and the Princess Gunnilda, his daughter[6].

[5] The Dowager Duchess of Bedford.

[6] This signature is in part taken from the title of one of Mrs. Manley's books, published in 1710, and entitled *Memoirs of Europe towards the close of the Eighth Century. Written by Eginardus, secretary and favourite to Charlemagne; and done into English by the translator of the New Atalantis.*

P.S. *Bowen* is the name of the gentleman who gave information of the letter sent to him to be copied, on hearing of the suspected forgeries. The whole *Minifry* are involved in the suspicions, as they defend the damsel, who still confesses nothing; and it is her mother, not she, who is supposed to have tampered with the groom; and is discarded, too, by her husband.

2779. To the Earl of Charlemont.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 17, 1791.

It is difficult, my Lord, with common language that has been so prostituted in compliments, to express the real sense of gratitude which I do feel at my heart, for the obligation I have to your Lordship for an act of friendship as unexpected as it was unsolicited; which last circumstance doubles the favour, as it evinces your Lordship's generosity and nobleness of temper, without surprising me. How can I thank your Lordship, as I ought, for interesting yourself, and of yourself, to save me a little mortification, which I deserve, and should deserve more, had I the vanity to imagine that my printing a few copies of my disgusting tragedy would occasion different and surreptitious editions of it?

Mr. Walker has acquainted me, my Lord, that your Lordship has most kindly interposed to prevent a bookseller of Dublin from printing an edition of *The Mysterious Mother* without my consent; and with the conscious dignity of a great mind, your Lordship has not even hinted to me the graciousness of that favour. How have I merited such condescending goodness, my Lord? Had I a prospect of longer life, I never could pay the debt of gratitude; the weightier, as your Lordship did not intend I should know that I owe it. My gratitude can never be effaced; and I am

charmed that it is due, and due with so much honour to me, that nothing could bribe me to have less obligation to your Lordship, of which I am so proud. But as to the play itself, I doubt it must take its fate. Mr. Walker tells me the booksellers have desired him to remonstrate to me, urging that they have already expended fifty pounds; and Mr. Walker adds, as no doubt would be the case, that should this edition be stifled, when now expected, some other printer would publish it. I certainly might indemnify the present operator, but I know too much of the craft, not to be sure that I should be persecuted by similar exactions; and alas! I have exposed myself but too much to the tyranny of the press, not to know that it taxes delinquents as well as multiplies their faults.

In truth, my Lord, it is too late now to hinder copies of my play from being spread. It has appeared here, both whole and in fragments; and, to prevent a spurious one, I was forced to have some printed myself: therefore, if I consent to an Irish edition, it is from no vain desire of diffusing the performance. Indeed, my good Lord, I have lived too long, not to have divested myself both of vanity and affected modesty. I have not existed to past seventy-three without having discovered the futility and triflingness of my own talents: and, at the same time, it would be impertinent to pretend to think that there is no merit in the execution of a tragedy, on which I have been so much flattered; though I am sincere in condemning the egregious absurdity of selecting a subject so improper for the stage, and even offensive to private readers.

But I have said too much on a personal theme; and therefore, after repeating a million of thanks to your Lordship for the honour of your interposition, I will beg your Lordship, if you please, to signify to the bookseller that you withdraw your prohibition: but I shall not answer

Mr. Walker's letter till I have your Lordship's approbation, for you are both my Lord Chamberlain and licencer; and though I have a tolerably independent spirit, I may safely trust myself under the absolute power of one who has voluntarily protected me against the licentiousness of those who have invaded my property, and who distinguishes so accurately and justly between licence and liberty.

2780. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 18, 1791.

The history of myself will be short but sweet: my pains are all gone, and if there is dry weather I think I shall get out next week; but I am so afraid of a relapse, that I will run no risks—I am content to be at ease: what calls have I abroad? Our papers say General O'Hara is arrived, but as General Conway has not seen him, he concludes him performing quarantine.

Here is a shocking, not a fatal, codicil to Gunnilda's story. But first I should tell you, that two days after the explosion, the Signora Madre took a postchaise-and-four, and drove to Blenheim; but, not finding the Duke and Duchess there, she inquired where the Marquis was, and pursued him to Sir H. Dashwood's: finding him there, she began about her poor daughter; but he interrupted her, said there was an end put to all that, and desired to lead her to her chaise, which he insisted on doing, and did. I think this another symptom of the Minifry being accomplices to the daughter's enterprises. Well! after the groom's confession, and after Mr. Bowen had been confronted with her, and produced to her face her note to his wife, which she resolutely disowned, she desired the Duke of Argyll to let her take an oath on the Bible of her perfect innocence of every circumstance of the whole transaction; which you may be sure he did not

permit. *N'importe:* the next day, taking two of the Duchess of Bedford's servants for witnesses, she went before a justice of peace, swore to her innocence and ignorance throughout, even of the note to Mrs. Bowen; and then said to the magistrate, 'Sir, from my youth you may imagine I do not know the solemnity of an oath; but, to convince you I do, I know my salvation depends on what I have now sworn.' Solve all this, if you can! Is it madness? Does even romance extend its inventions so far, or its dispensations? It is but a burlesque part of this wonderful tale, that old crazy Bedford exhibits Miss every morning on the causeway in Hyde Park; and declares her *protégée* some time ago refused the hand of your acquaintance, Mr. Trevelyan[1]. Except of the contending Opera Houses, one can hear of nothing but Miss Gunning; but it is now grown so disgusting a story, that I shall be glad to hear and repeat to you no more about it.

The Pantheon has opened, and is small, they say, but pretty and simple; all the rest ill-conducted, and from the singers to the scene-shifters imperfect; the dances long and bad, and the whole performance so dilatory and tedious, that it lasted from eight to half an hour past twelve.

The rival theatre is said to be magnificent and lofty, but doubtful whether it will be suffered to come to life: in short, the contest will grow politics; *Dieu et Mon Droit* supporting the Pantheon, and *Ich Dien* countenancing the Haymarket. It is unlucky that the amplest receptacle is to hold the minority!

20th.

O'Hara is come to town. You will love him better than ever. He persuaded the captain of the ship, whom you will

LETTER 2780.—[1] John, eldest son of Sir John Trevelyan, fourth Baronet, whom he succeeded in 1828. He married in August 1791 Maria, daughter of Sir Thomas Spencer Wilson, Baronet, of Charlton, Kent.

love for being persuaded, to stop at Lisbon, that he might see Mrs. Damer. O'Hara has been shockingly treated[2]!

The house of Richmond is on the point of receiving a very great blow. Colonel Lenox[3], who had been dangerously ill but was better, has relapsed, with all the worst symptoms; and is too weak to be sent to the south, as the physicians recommended. Lady Catherine is breeding, but that is very precarious; and should it even be a son, how many years ere that can be a comfortable resource!

Is not it strange that London, in February and Parliament sitting, should furnish no more paragraphs? Yet, confined at home and in everybody's way, and consequently my room being a coffee-house from two to four, I probably hear all events worth relating as soon as they are born, and I send you them before they are a week old. Indeed, I think the Gunninghiana may last you a month at Pisa, where, I suppose, the grass grows in the streets as fast as news. When I go out again, I am likely to know less: I go but to few, and those the privatest places I can find, which are not the common growth of London; nor, but to amuse you, should I inquire after news. What is a juvenile world to me; or its pleasures, interests, or squabbles? I scarce know the performers by sight.

21st.

It is very hard! The Gunnings will not let me or the town have done with them. La Madre has advertised a Letter to the Duke of Argyll: so he is forced to collect counter-affidavits. The groom has deposed that she promised him twenty pounds a year for his life, and he has given up a letter that she wrote to him. The mother, when she went after the Marquis, would have persuaded him to get into her

[2] He had failed to obtain the Lieutenant-Governorship of Gibraltar.

[3] He recovered, and succeeded as fourth Duke of Richmond in 1806. His wife was Lady Charlotte (not Catherine) Gordon, daughter of fourth Duke of Gordon.

chaise; but he would not venture being carried to Gretna Green, and married by force. She then wanted him to sign a paper, that all was over between him and her daughter. He said, 'Madam, nothing was ever begun'; and refused.

I told you wrong: mother and daughter were not actually in the Duchess of Bedford's house, but in Lord J. Russell's, which she lent to them; nor were her servants witnesses to the oath before Justice Hide, but Dr. Halifax and the apothecary. The signora and her infanta now, *for privacy*, are retired into St. James's Street, next door to Brooks's; whence it is supposed Miss will angle for unmarried Marquises—perhaps for Lord Titchfield[4]. It is lost time for people to write novels, who can compose such a romance as these good folks have invented. Adieu!

2781. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Feb. 26, 1791.

I HAVE no letter from you to answer, nor anything new that is the least interesting to tell you. The Duke of Argyll has sent a gentleman with a cart-load of affidavits, which the latter read to mother and daughter, in order to prevent the publication of their libel; but it only enraged the former, who vows she will print all she knows, that is, anything she has heard by their entire intimacy in the family, or, no doubt, what she can invent or misrepresent. What a Medusa!

There has been a fragment of a rehearsal in the Haymarket, but still the Pantheon remains master of the field of battle; the vanquished are preparing manifestos, but they seldom recover the day.

The Duchess of Dorset[1] is brought to bed of a dead child.

[4] William Henry Cavendish Bentinck (1768–1854), eldest son of third Duke of Portland, whom he succeeded in 1809.

LETTER 2781.—[1] Arabella Diana (d. 1825), eldest daughter and coheir

Madame du Barry is come over to recover her jewels, of which she has been robbed—not by the National Assembly, but by four Jews who have been seized here and committed to Newgate. Though the late Lord Barrymore acknowledged her husband to be of his noble blood, will she own the present Earl for a relation, when she finds him turned strolling player? If she regains her diamonds, perhaps Mrs. Hastings may carry her to court[2].

If you want bigger events, you may send to the Russian army, who will cut you fifteen thousand throats in a paragraph; or, *en attendant*, you may piddle with the havoc made at Chantilly, which has been half demolished by the rights of men, as the poor old Mesdames have been stopped by the rights of the *poissardes*; for, as it is true that extremes meet, the moment despotism was hurled from the throne, it devolved to the mob, whose majesties, not being able to write their names, do not issue *lettres de cachet*, but execute their wills with their own hands; for hanging, which degrades an executioner, *ne déroge pas* in sovereigns—witness the Czar Peter the Great, Muley Ishmael, and many religious and gracious African monarchs.

After eleven weeks of close confinement, I went out yesterday to take the air; but was soon driven back by rain and sleet, which soon ripened to a tempest of wind and snow, and continued all night: it does not freeze, but blows so hard, that I shall sally out no more till the weather has recovered its temper—I do not mean that I expect Pisan skies.

28th.

It was on Saturday that I began this; it is now Monday, and I have no letter from you, though we have had dozens of east winds. I am sorry to find that it costs above six

of Sir Charles Cope, second Baronet, of Bruern; m. 1. (1790) third Duke of Dorset; 2. (1801) Earl Whitworth.

[2] Mrs. Hastings was a favourite of Queen Charlotte.

weeks to say a word at Pisa and have an answer in London. This makes correspondence very uncomfortable; you will be talking to me of Miss Gunning, when, perhaps, she may be sent to Botany Bay, and be as much forgotten here as *the Monster*[3]. Still she has been a great resource this winter; for, though London is apt to produce Wilkeses, and George Gordons, and Mrs. Rudds, and Horne Tookes, and other phenomena, wet and dry, the present season has been very unprolific; and we are forced to import French news, as we used to do fashions and opéras comiques. The Mesdames are actually set out: I shall be glad to hear they are safe at Turin, for are there no *poissardes* but at Paris? *Natio poissarda est.*

Mr. Gibbon writes that he has seen Necker, and found him still devoured by ambition, and I should think by mortification at the foolish figure he has made. Gibbon admires Burke to the skies, and even the religious parts, he says.

I am forced to return to that old story myself. Though a wet night, I went out yesterday evening, but into a warm private room, and was not the worse for it: I trust I am safe now from a relapse.

Monday evening.

The east winds are making me amends; one of them has brought me twins. I am sorry to find that even Pisa's sky is not quite sovereign, but that you have both been out of order, though, thank God! quite recovered both. If a Florentine March is at all like an English one, I hope you will not remove thither till April. Some of its months, I am sure, were sharper than those of our common wear are. Pray be quite easy about me: I am entirely recovered, though, if change were bad, we have scarce had one day

[3] Renwick Williams, who went about London attempting to stab women with a knife. He was tried at the Old Bailey in July 1790, and found guilty of misdemeanour.

without every variety of bad weather, with a momentary leaf-gold of sun. I have been out three times, and to-day have made five-and-twenty visits, and was let in at six; and, though a little fatigued, am still able, you see, to finish my letter. You seem to think I palliated my illness: I certainly did not tell you that I thought it doubtful how it would end; yet I told you all the circumstances, and surely did not speak sanguinely.

I wish, in No. 20, you had not again named October or November. I have quite given up those months, and am vexed I ever pressed for them, as they would break into your reasonable plans, for which I abandon any foolish ones of my own. But I am a poor philosopher, or rather am like all philosophers, have no presence of mind, and must study my part before I can act it. I have now settled myself not to expect you this year—do not unsettle me: I dread a disappointment, as I do a relapse of the gout; and therefore cut this article short, that I may not indulge vain hopes. My affection for you both is unalterable: can I give so strong a proof as by supplicating you, as I do earnestly, to act as is most prudent for your healths and interests? A long journey in November would be the worst part you could take, and I beseech you not to think of it: for me, you see I take a great deal of killing, nor is it so easy to die as is imagined.

Thank you, my dearest Miss Agnes, for your postscript. I love to see your handwriting; and yet do not press for it, as you are shy: though I address myself equally to both, and consult the healths of both in what I have recommended above. Here is a postscript for yours: Madame du Barry was to go and swear to her jewels before the Lord Mayor. Boydell, who is a little better bred than Monsieur Bailly[4],

[4] Jean Sylvain Bailly (1736–1793), astronomer, and Mayor of Paris 1789-91. He was guillotined.

made excuses for being obliged to administer the oath *chez lui*, but begged she would name her hour; and, when she did, he fetched her himself in the state-coach, and had a Mayoroyal banquet ready for her. She has got most of her jewels again. I want the King to send her four Jews to the National Assembly, and tell them it is the change or *la monnoie* of Lord George Gordon, the Israelite.

Colonel Lenox is much better: the Duchess of Leinster had a letter from Goodwood to-day which says he rides out. I am glad you do. I said nothing on the *Charming man's* poem[5]. I fear I said too much to him myself. He said others liked it; and showed me a note from Mr. Burke, that was hyperbole itself. I wish him so well, that I am sorry he should be so flattered, when, in truth, he has no genius. There is no novelty, no plan, and no suite in his poetry; though many of the lines are pretty. Dr. Darwin alone can exceed his predecessors.

Let me repeat to both, that distance of place and time can make no alteration in my friendship. It grew from esteem for your characters, and understandings, and tempers; and became affection from your good-natured attentions to me, where there is so vast a disproportion in our ages. Indeed, that complaisance spoiled me; but I have weaned myself of my own self-love, and you shall hear no more of its dictates. Adieu!

P.S. I had left myself no room but this to tell you I have seen Pepys but once since I came to town, and now I shall meet him sometimes. Mr. Batt always inquires after you; Lady Cecilia is in bed with a cold. I have been at Lady Herries's to-night; she is better and begins to crawl about a little.

[5] *The Shakespeare Gallery*, in praise of Boydell's collection of pictures.

2782. To the Countess of Charlemont[1].

Berkeley Square, Feb. 26, 1791.

Mr. Walpole cannot help troubling Lady Charlemont with a few words, and begging her Ladyship to accept his most grateful thanks for the great honour of her letter. Mr. Walpole is extremely concerned to hear of Lord Charlemont's indisposition, and is ashamed of having disturbed his Lordship by so long a letter on a personal affair, but certainly knew nothing of his not being well, and shall inquire most anxiously for a better account.

2783. To Miss Mary and Miss Agnes Berry.

Berkeley Square, March 5, 1791.

One may live in a vast capital, and know no more of three parts of it than of Carthage. When I was at Florence, I have surprised some Florentines by telling them that London was built, like their city (where you often cross the bridges several times in a day), on each side of the river; and yet that I had never been but on one side; for then I had never been in Southwark. When I was very young, and in the height of the opposition to my father, my mother wanted a large parcel of bugles; for what use I forget. As they were then out of fashion, she could get none. At last she was told of a quantity in a little shop in an obscure alley in the City. We drove thither; found a great stock; she bought it, and bade the proprietor send it home. He said, 'Whither?' 'To Sir Robert Walpole's.' He asked coolly, 'Who is Sir Robert Walpole?'

Letter 2782. — Not in C.; now printed from original in possession of the Royal Irish Academy.

[1] Mary, daughter of Thomas Hickman, of Brickhill, Co. Clare; m. (1768) first Earl of Charlemont.

This is very like Cambridge, who tells you three stories to make you understand a fourth. In short, t'other morning a gentleman made me a visit, and asked if I had heard of the great misfortune that had happened? The Albion Mills are burnt down. I asked where they were; supposing they were powder-mills in the country, that had blown up. I had literally never seen or heard of the spacious lofty building at the end of Blackfriars Bridge. At first it was supposed maliciously burnt, and it is certain the mob stood and enjoyed the conflagration, as of a monopoly; but it had been on fire, and it was thought extinguished. The building had cost a hundred thousand pounds; and the loss in corn and flour is calculated at a hundred and forty thousand pounds. I do not answer for the truth of the sums; but it is certain that Palace Yard and part of St. James's Park were covered with half-burnt grain.

This accident, and my introduction, have helped me to a good part of my letter; for you must have observed that even in this overgrown town the winter has not been productive of events. Scandal I hate, and would not send you what I thought so; but it is not doubted now but two of our finest ladies, sisters, have descended into the *basse-cour* of the Alley with Jews and brokers, and waddled out with a large loss of feathers, though not so considerable as was said—yet twenty-three thousand makes a great gap in pin-money. You will find the initials of both without going so far as the fifth letter of the alphabet[1]. Good Hannah More is labouring to amend our region, and has just published a book called *An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World.* It is prettily written—but her enthusiasm increases; and when she comes to town, I shall tell

LETTER 2783.—[1] Walpole apparently refers to the Duchess of Devonshire and her sister Lady Duncannon.

her, that if she preaches to people of fashion, she will be a bishop *in partibus infidelium.*

Lady Cecilia's disorder has literally terminated in the gout in her foot. I called on her this evening, but as she was in her bedchamber up two pair of stairs, my gout would not let me be so clamberaceous; and indeed, she sent Miss Johnstone down to the coach to me to desire I would not attempt it. I think, if the remedy is not as bad, that the gout may relieve her headaches.

Good night! I have two days to wait for a letter that I may answer. Stay, I should tell you that I have been at Sir Joseph Banks's literary saturnalia, where was a Parisian watchmaker, who produced the smallest automaton that I suppose was ever created. It was a rich snuff-box, not too large for a woman. On opening the lid an enamelled bird started up, sat on the rim, turned round, fluttered its wings, and piped in a delightful tone the notes of different birds; particularly the jug-jug of the nightingale. It is the prettiest plaything you ever saw; the price tempting—only five hundred pounds. That economist, the Prince of Wales, could not resist it, and has bought one of those dicky-birds. If the maker finds such customers, he will not end like one of his profession here, who made the serpent in *Orpheus and Eurydice*; and who fell so deeply in love with his own works, that he did nothing afterwards but make serpents, of all sorts and sizes, till he was ruined and broke.

It is six o'clock of Monday evening the 7th, and no letters from Pisa; but I will not seal this till to-morrow noon, in hopes—otherwise I have not a tittle to add, but that Lady Mary Palk[2] is dead in childbed: I think I have heard you mention her, or I should not, for I did not know her.

[2] Daughter of John Bligh, third Earl of Darnley, and wife of Sir Lawrence Palk, second Baronet, of Haldon, near Exeter.

The Mesdames are said to be safely out of France, after being stopped three times. There have been great mobs at the Luxembourg and the Tuileries, and La Fayette is said rather to have acted the royalist. The provinces grow turbulent, but you must hear French news sooner and more authentically than I do. Of the Gunning not a word since my last; nor of Mrs. Buller, though I have called on her; nor of the righteous Miss Foldson.

The Lord Mayor did not fetch Madame du Barry in the city-royal coach, but kept her to dinner. She is gone, but returns in April.

Tuesday morning.

I find your No. 21 on my table, but as it only talks of your life at Pisa, and of the community of apartments, which appears as bad as Buxton or Harrowgate, I have nothing to add but to wonder how any one can seek such an uncomfortable life a second time. Adieu!

P.S.—I should not wonder if Italians flock hither, for Carnavali, the exhibitor of the *fantoccini*, has got one of the 20,000*l.* in the lottery—but had, unluckily for him, sold two-thirds of it.

2784. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, March 11, 1791.

I USUALLY begin my letters to you on Fridays, but to-day for a different reason, not because I have anything to say, but like the French lady to her husband, because I have nothing to do. In short, I have got a little codicil to my gout. It returned into my ankle on Monday and Tuesday, left it on Wednesday, and yesterday came into my knee. I have no pain, unless I attempt to walk; so have been

LETTER 2784.—Not in C.

forced just now to send an excuse to Lady Louisa Macdonald, where I was to have been to-night—and so must amuse myself *en famille.*

The Gunnings continue to supply me with matter. As it is now known that two of the Minifry have been mad, I should conclude the mother and daughter were so, if two persons could lose their senses at the same period, and on the same subject. Well, these two outpensioners of Bedlam have sent a new narrative to the Duke of Marlborough, wherein the infanta maintains to his Grace's face that she passed three *days* with him and the Duchess this summer at Sion, though it was but three *hours* ; and cites a kind speech of his to her, for the truth of which she appeals to Sir John Riddel, who was present and heard it. The Duke, doubting his own eyes or memory, questions Sir John, who, equally amazed, says, 'Your Grace knows I had not the honour of being with you at Sion when Miss Gunning was there.' All this is a new style of romancing, and though I repeat it, I can scarce believe it while I repeat it.

The letter to the Duke of Argyll is to appear next week. Somebody has sent a proof of the frontispiece to the Duke, who showed it to General Conway, as Lord Lorn has to Mrs. Anderson. There is a medallion of Gunnilda supported by two—Cupids, not marquises, her name, and four verses beneath. The Duchess of Bedford has written to Lord Lorn, begging him to intercede for his cousin, for the sake of his dear mother who doted on her, and which dear mother she, Duchess Gertrude, introduced into the world. If Pisa or Florence produce more diversion than London, you have but to say so.

The Haymarket Theatre opened last night with an opera gratis. It is computed that four thousand persons accepted the favour, and the theatre is allowed to be the most splendid and convenient, let Naples say what it will ; the

singers very indifferent ; the dancers (Vestris and Hilsberg) and the dances charming. Still it is probable there will be no more representations, for people cannot get much by giving operas for nothing.

I have got a solution of Miss Foldson : she has a mother and eight brothers and sisters, who make her work incessantly to maintain them, and who reckon it loss of time to them if she finishes any pictures that are paid for beforehand. That, however, is so very uncommon that I should not think the family would be much the richer. I do know that Lord Carlisle paid for the portraits of his children last July, and cannot get them from her ; at that rate I may see you before your pictures !

I have not so clear an exposition of Mrs. Buller's behaviour, yet some suspicion. She is grown extremely Germanized—and of whom did I hear extremely intimate in a private party at her house a few nights ago, but one who lives in the street directly behind hers, and whom I should be as sorry to meet there or anywhere, as he could be to meet me[1]. *These* Germans remind me that I saw in to-day's newspaper that the wife[2] of the Margrave of Anspach is dead. Courage, Milady Craven ! donnez-nous une nouvelle édition des aventures de Madame la Duchesse de Kingston ! et dépêchez-vous ; car on dit que Milord Craven se meurt. Il seroit indigne de vous que d'attendre la main gauche, et un mariage estimé légitime.

Lady Beaumont[3] called on me two days ago, and inquired after you kindly. The rest of my letter must depend on one from you, or on the town and the Gunnings. There is published a Grub print not void of humour, called 'The New Art of Gunning' ; Miss, astride a cannon, is firing a

[1] The Duke of Gloucester.

[2] Frederica Caroline, a Princess of Saxe Saalfeld.

[3] Margaret (d. 1829), daughter of John Willes, of Astrop, Northamptonshire, and wife of Sir George Beaumont, of Cole Orton, Leicestershire.

volley of forged letters at the castle of Blenheim, and old Gertrude, emaciated and withered, and very like, lifting up her hoop to shelter injured innocence, as she calls her.

Sunday, 13th.

Yesterday I had the misfortune of hearing of the death of my oldest remaining friend, Lord Strafford, whom I knew from the time he was twelve years old, and who was invariably kind and obliging to me. This is the heavy tax one pays for living long!—but as it is not a language necessary to be talked to your time of life, I shall keep my moralizing for my own use, and collect for yours only what will amuse you; though as I gather from hearsay, I must often send you false reports; still I take care they should only be on trifles of no consequence. Thus I told you old French had funded her legacies on her collection; but luckily for her legatees she had money enough in the stocks to discharge the 6,000*l.*: or her bequests would have fallen wofully short. Three or four years ago, she had wanted to sell her pictures to the Czarina for 1,200*l.* a year, estimating her own life, she said, but at two years' purchase. Well, her pictures, with the addition of her bronzes, china, &c., were sold by auction yesterday and Friday, and produced but 978*l.*; and yet the pictures went for more than they were worth.

Monday, 14th.

Your No. 23, which I received this morning at breakfast, whets no reply, being merely carnivalesque; but you are going to more royal festivities at Florence with their Neapolitan and Tuscan majesties and dukedoms. Shall not you call at *Charing Cross* on that account?—let me know in time.

The *Great Turk* at Petersburg has sent us rather a *de haut en bas* answer to our proposal of mediating to hinder her

removing to Constantinople ; we have frowned at the rate of eighteen men-of-war—still, keeping up our dignity costs us so dear, that I hope we shall let her go to the Black Sea and be d——d !

Mesdames de Biron and Cambis have taken houses on Richmond Green as well as les Boufflers and Madame de Roncherolles, so it will be a *Petty France*. Such swarms of Franks have left the country, that I wonder the National Assembly, which delights in wasting time on reviving old names, do not call their sovereign King of Gaul instead of King of the French. On the contrary, Mesdames Adelaïde and Victoire, formidable as the latter's name is, will not put the Romans[4] much in mind of their precursor Brennus.

I have cancelled my codicil of gout, and shall issue forth again this evening, and perhaps at the end of the week go to Strawberry for a day or two, as the weather lately has been uncommonly fine. Adieu !

2785. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Saturday, March 19, 1791.

I did not begin my letter on customary Friday, because I had nothing new to tell or to say. The town lies fallow—not an incident worth repeating as far as I know. Parliament manufactures only bills, not politics. I never understood anything useful ; and, now that my time and connections are shrunk to so narrow a compass, what business have I with business ? As I have mended considerably for the last four days, and as we have had a fortnight of soft warm weather, and a south-west wind to-day, I have ventured hither for change of air, and to give orders about some repairs at Cliveden ; which, by the way,

[4] The Mesdames took up their abode in Rome after their escape from France.

Mr. H. Bunbury, two days ago, proposed to take off my hands for his life. I really do not think I accepted his offer. I shall return to town on Monday, and hope to find a letter to answer—or what will this do?

Apropos, as the town stands stock still, I believe I shall change my post-days from Tuesdays to Fridays—at least when I am as barren as at this moment. However, when you do not hear from me by the former, be assured you will wait but four days longer; besides as I shall now be frequently coming hither, I may have more to say at the end of the week than at the beginning.

I met Mrs. Buller t'other night at Lady Mount-Edgcumbe's, and she lays all her omissions on the *Charming man*, who mentioned my message so slightly that she did not comprehend it. I huffed her worse for her bad taste in sending for *double Glo'ster cheese*[1] in an evening, and vowed I will never enter her doors, if smelling of it. I have a notion her son is of a regiment that eats of it. The Greatheds are in Mrs. Damer's house. I hope they will not be there six weeks.

Berkeley Square, Monday evening.

I am returned, and find the only letter I dreaded, and the only one, I trust, that I shall ever not be impatient to receive from you. Though ten thousand times kinder than I deserve, it wounds my heart; as I find I have hurt two of the persons I love the best upon earth, and whom I am most constantly studying to please and serve. That I soon repented of my murmurs, you have seen by my subsequent letters. The truth, as you may have perceived, though no excuse, was, that I had thought myself dying, and should never see you more; that I was extremely weak and low when Mrs. Damer's letter arrived, and mentioned her supposing I should not see you till spring twelvemonth.

Letter 2785.—[1] See the previous letter.

That terrible sentence recalled Mr. Batt's being the first to assure me of your going abroad, when I had concluded you had laid aside the design. I did sincerely allow that in both instances you had acted from tenderness in concealing your intentions; but, as I knew I could better bear the information from yourselves than from others, I thought it unfriendly to let me learn from others what interested me so deeply: yet I do not in the least excuse my conduct; no, I condemn it in every light, and shall never forgive myself if you do not promise me to be guided entirely by your own convenience and inclinations about your return.

I am perfectly well again, and just as likely to live one year as half an one. Indulge your pleasure in being abroad while you are there. I am now reasonable enough to enjoy your happiness as my own; and, since you are most kind when I least deserve it, how can I express my gratitude for giving up the scruple that was so distressing to me? Convince me you are in earnest by giving me notice that you will write to Charing Cross while the Neapolitans are at Florence. I will look on that as a clearer proof of your forgiving my criminal letter, than your return before you like it. It is most sure that nothing is more solid or less personal than my friendship for you two; and even my complaining letter, though unjust and unreasonable, proved that the nearer I thought myself to quitting the world, the more my heart was set on my two friends; nay, *they* had occupied the busiest moments of my illness as well as the most fretful ones.

Forgive then, my dearest friends, what could proceed from nothing but too impatient affection. You say most truly you did not deserve my complaints: your patience and temper under them make me but the more in the wrong; and to have hurt you, who have known but too

much grief, is such a contradiction to the whole turn of my mind ever since I knew you, that I believe my weakness from illness was beyond even what I suspected. It is sure that, when I am in my perfect senses, the whole bent of my thoughts is to promote your and your sister's felicity; and you know nothing can give me satisfaction like your allowing me to be of use to you. I speak honestly, notwithstanding my unjust letter; I had rather serve you than see you. Here let me finish this subject: I do not think I shall be faulty to you again.

The mother Gunning has published her letter to the Duke of Argyll, and it disappoints everybody. It is neither romantic, nor entertaining, nor abusive, but on the General and Mr. and Mrs. Bowen, and the General's groom. On the Bowens it is so immeasurably scurrilous, that I think they must prosecute her. She accuses them and her husband of a conspiracy to betray and ruin his own daughter, without even attempting to assign a motive to them. Of the house of Argyll she says not a word. In short, it is a most dull incoherent rhapsody, that gives no account at all of the story that gave origin to her book, and at which no mortal could guess from it; and the 246 pages contain nothing but invectives on her four supposed enemies, and endless tiresome encomiums on the virtues of her *glorious darling*, and the unspottable innocence of that harmless lambkin. I would not even send it to you if I had an opportunity—you would not have patience to go through it; and there, I suppose, the absurd legend will end. I am heartily tired of it. Adieu!

P.S. That ever *I* should give *you two* an uneasy moment! Oh, forgive me: yet I do not deserve pardon in my own eyes; and less in my own heart.

2786. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Sunday, March 27, 1791.

Though I begin my dispatch to-day, I think I shall change my post-days, as I hinted, from Tuesdays to Fridays; not only as more commodious for learning news for you, but as I do not receive your letters generally but on Mondays, I have less time to answer. I have an additional reason for delay this week. Mr. Pitt has notified that he is to deliver a message from the King to-morrow, to the House of Commons on the situation of Europe[1]; and should there be a long debate, I may not gather the particulars till Tuesday morning, and if my levee lasts late, shall not have time to write to you. Oh, now are you all impatience to hear *that* message; I am sorry to say that I fear it is to be a warlike one. The Autocratrix swears, d——n her eyes! she *will* hack her way to Constantinople through the blood of a hundred thousand more Turks, and that we are very impertinent for sending her a card with a sprig of olive. On the other hand, Prussia bounces and huffs and claims our promise of helping him to make peace by helping him to make war; and so, in the most charitable and pacific way in the world, we are, they say, to send twenty ships to the Baltic, and half as many to the Black Sea—this little Britain, commonly called Great Britain, is to dictate to Petersburg and Bengal, and cover Constantinople under those wings that reach from the north pole to the farthest East! I am mighty sorry for it, and hope we shall not prove a jackdaw that pretends to dress itself in the plumes of imperial eagles!

Letter 2786.—[1] The message (delivered on March 28) stated that 'as his Majesty's endeavours, in conjunction with his allies, to bring about a pacification between Russia and the Porte had proved ineffectual, his Majesty had judged it requisite, for the purpose of adding weight to his representations, to make some further augmentations to his naval force.' (*Ann. Reg.* 1791, p. 99.)

If we bounce abroad, we are more forgiving at home: a gentleman[2] who lives at the east end of St. James's Park has been sent for by a lady[3] who has a large house at the west end, and they have kissed and are friends; which he notified by toasting her health in a bumper at a club the other day. I know no circumstances, but am glad of it; I love peace, public or private: not so the chieftains of the contending theatres of harmony. Taylor, in wondrous respectful terms and full of affliction, has printed in the newspapers an advertisement, declaring that the Marquis's honour (the Lord Chamberlain) did in one season, and that an unprofitable one, send *orders* (you know, that is, tickets of admission without paying) into the Opera House, to the loss of the managers of four hundred pounds—servants, it is supposed, and Hertfordshire voters—eke and moreover that it has been sworn in Chancery that his Lordship, not as Lord Chamberlain, has stipulated with Gallini and O'Reilly that he, his heirs and assigns, should preserve the power of giving those detrimental *orders* in perpetuity. The immunity is a little new: former Chamberlains, it seems, even *durante officio*, have not exercised the privilege—if they had it.

One word more of the Gunnings. Captain Bowen informed the authoress, by the channel of the papers, that he shall prosecute her for the libel. She answered, by the same conveyance, that she is extremely glad of it. But there is a difficulty—unless the prosecution is criminal, it is thought that Madam being *femme couverte*, the charge must be made against her husband; and, to be sure, it would be droll that the General should be attacked for not hindering his wife from writing a libel, that is more virulent against him himself than anybody. Another little circumstance has come out: till the other day he did not

[2] The Prince of Wales. [3] The Queen.

know that he had claimed descent from Charlemagne in the newspapers; which, therefore, is referred to the same manufacture as the other forgeries. The General said, 'It is true, I am well born; but I know no such family in Ireland as the Charlemagnes.'

Lord Ossory has just been here, and told me that Gunnilda has written to Lord Blandford, in her own name and hand, begging his pardon (for promising herself marriage in his name), but imputing the first thought to his grandmother, whom she probably inspired to think of it. This letter the Duchess of Marlborough carried to the Duchess of Bedford, to open her eyes on her *protégée*, but with not much success; for what signify eyes, when the rest of the head is gone? She only said, 'You may be easy, for both mother and daughter are gone to France'—no doubt, on finding her Grace's money not so forthcoming as her countenance, and terrified by Captain Bowen's prosecution—and there, I hope, will terminate that strange story; for in France there is not a Marquis left to marry her. One has heard of nothing else for these seven months; and it requires some ingenuity to keep up the attention of such a capital as London for above half a year together.

I supped on Thursday at Mrs. Buller's with the Conways and Mount-Edgcumbes; and the next night at Lady Aylesbury's with the same company, and Lady Augusta Clavering. You know, on the famous night at your house when Gunnilda pretended that her father had received Lord Blandford's appointment of the wedding-day, we suspected, when they were gone, that we had seen doubts in Lady Augusta's face, and I desired her uncle, Lord Frederick, to ask her if we had guessed right; but she protests she had then no suspicion.

I have determined to send this away on Tuesday, whether I know the details of the temple of Janus to-morrow in

time or not, that you may give yourselves airs of importance, if the Tuscan ministers pretend to tell you news of your own country that you do not know. You may say, your chargé des affaires sent you word of the King's message; and you may be mysterious about the rest; for mystery in the diplomatic dictionary is construed knowledge, though, like a Hebrew word, it means the reverse too.

Sunday night.

I have been at White Pussy's[4] this evening. She asked much after *you's*. I did not think her Lord looked as if *he* would drive Prince Potemkin out of Bulgaria; but we trust that a new Frederick of Prussia and a new William Pitt will. Could they lay Catherine in the Black Sea, as ghosts used to be laid in the Red, the world would be obliged to them.

I have proved in the right in determining to let this depart on Tuesday, for the martial message is only to be delivered to-morrow, and to be taken into consideration the next day; thence I could not send you the result till Friday, when I may possibly write again, and then adhere to that for my post-days.

Tuesday morning.

Your most kind and satisfactory No. 24 is come, and gives me infinite joy—yet still I have a thorn left; for how can I be easy if I think that you return a moment sooner than you would like in complaisance to me?—and then your house in Audley Street will be unlet from the 25th of May, which I thought was hired till Christmas! I know not what to say, but still beg you will do what is most convenient and best for yourselves. I will accept no promise that ties you down to anything; so heartily do I repent of my complaining letter. I have neither time

[4] Lady Amherst, so called by Walpole and the Berrys.

nor paper to say more now, except my concern for your cold—but I shall write again on Friday and will then answer your letter fully, for my heart is full of its kindness. Adieu!

2787. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Thursday, March 31, 1791.

I POSTPONE my farther answer to your last till I have satisfied Mr. Berry's curiosity about the war with Semiramis. The King's martial message was adopted on Tuesday by both Houses; but the measure is exceedingly unpopular, and even some impression was made on the court troops. The ministerialists affect to give out that matters will not ripen to war, as if our blustering would terrify a woman in whom fear of no sort seems to predominate. More this deponent knows not.

Now, my dearest friends, I turn to you, and do most cordially implore you both not to bind yourselves nor to hold yourselves bound to me by any promise about your return. Let it depend entirely on your own inclinations and convenience. I cannot forgive my sickly impatience in writing that peevish letter which vexed you: it has vexed *me* more. Are you to be pleased only by what would please me? What claim have I to any sacrifice? and why should you make me any? or think you that I cannot sacrifice my own wishes to your content? Oh, indeed but I can, and wish to do so. These are my earnest sentiments, and I could but repeat them in various words were I to continue writing all night.

We have no other positive news since my Tuesday's letter. There is no peace between the opera theatres; the Haymarket rather triumphs. They have opened twice, taking money in an evasive manner, pretending themselves

LETTER 2787.—Not in C.

concerts; the singers are in their own clothes, the dancers dressed, and no recitative—a sort of opera in *déshabillé*. Threats of arrest have been thrown out, but no *coup de main*. Some think the return of the judges from the circuit is awaited; but perhaps the court is sensible of having begun by being in the wrong.

I never mention France, concluding you more *à portée* to know. The hideous barbarity at Douai, where they have fractured a man's skull, and then taken him out of bed, and hanged him after he had been trepanned; while the prisons are over-stuffed, after they found but six prisoners in the Bastile, does not convince me yet that they have got a milder government.

How sorry I am that you have lost the satisfaction of being with your friend Mrs. Cholmeley in town this season. I doubt two courts will not make you amends.

I feel every week the disagreeableness of the distance between us: each letter is generally three weeks on its passage, and we receive answers to what one must often forget one has said; and cannot under six weeks learn what one is anxious to know. Balloons, had they succeeded, would have prodigiously abridged delays; but *French* discoveries are not, I believe, endowed with duration; when they have broken necks, and cut throats, they find the world forced to content itself with old inventions. French levity never takes disappointment into its calculations.

This must be a short letter, for even London, you see, now the *Gunnings* are gone, cannot furnish a whole sheet once a week: however, I had rather leave half my paper blank than have any campaign-work to fill it with. Europe at present is in a strange ferment, distracted between the demons of republicanism and universal monarchy—at least Prussia and we say that Semiramis aims at the latter; if she does, we at least might wish her removed to Constan-

tinople: she would be farther off. Nay, I am so ignorant as to imagine that, if there, she would cultivate and restore Greece, &c., and be a better customer than the Turks. Nor am I disposed to think Prussia a substantial ally: it is a fictitious power that would have shrunk to little again with its creator had the successor been an inactive prince. Attention, treasures, and a most formidable army he has, but if war dissipates his hoards, and diminishes his force, which the squander of his wealth will weaken too, *adieu! panier, vendanges sont faites.* These are my speculations—I don't know whether they have come into the head of anybody else, nor care whether they deserve it. I write to amuse you and myself, and only reason, because I have nothing better to send you. I am far from fond of dissertationary letters, which present themselves humbly, but hope to rank as essays. I must be in sad want of nonsense when I talk seriously on general topics, and I hope that, except when you were in a storm, or travelling through the land of anarchy, or when I was in terror of seeing you no more, or not for an age, you will not charge me with any gravity. I have gossiped to anybody's heart's wish; and the deuce is in it, if any letters are worth receiving that have the fear of wisdom before their eyes. Adieu to *Arno's vale* till next Friday.

2788. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, April 3, 1791.

Oh, what a shocking accident[1]! Oh, how I detest your going abroad more than I have done yet in my crossest mood! You escaped the storm on the 10th of October, that gave me such an alarm; you passed unhurt through the cannibals of France and their republic of *larrons* and *poissardes*, who terrified me sufficiently; but I never

Letter 2788.—[1] Miss Berry had fallen down and had cut her nose severely.

expected that you would dash yourself to pieces at Pisa! You say I love truth, and that you have told me the exact truth; but how can fear believe?

You say you slept *part* of the night after your fall—oh, but the other part! Was not you feverish? How can I wait above a month for answers to an hundred questions I want to ask; and how a week for another letter? A little comfort I have had even since I received the horrid account; I have met Mrs. Lockart at Lady Hesketh's, and she has assured me that there is a very good surgeon at Pisa—if he is, he must have blooded you directly. I wish you had had some arquebusade water. How you must have suffered by washing the wound with vinegar, though rightly!—and what your father and sister must have felt at seeing you! How could you be well enough to write the next day? Why did not Miss Agnes for you? But I conclude she was not recovered enough of *your* fall. When I am satisfied that you have not hurt yourself more than you own, I will indulge my concern about the outside of your nose, about which I shall not have your indifference. I am not in love with you, yet fully in love enough not to bear any damage done to that perfect nose, or to any of all your beautiful features; then, too, I shall scold at your thoughtlessness.

How I hate a party of pleasure! It never turns out well: fools fall out, and sensible people fall down! Still I thank you a million of times for writing yourself. If Miss Agnes had written for you, I confess I should have been ten times more alarmed than I am; and yet I am alarmed enough.

My sweet Agnes, I feel for you too, though you have not the misery of being a thousand miles from your wounded sister, nor are waiting for a second account. The quantity of blood she lost has, I trust, prevented any fever. I would

ask for every tiny circumstance, but, alas, I must wait above a month for an answer!

Though I wrote twice last week, it was impossible to let the first post-day slip me on such a terrible accident. I received the account two days sooner than the letters generally arrive, and the day after my last was gone, so I can have nothing to add, nor indeed do I think of anything but the fall at Pisa, of which I went full to Lady Hesketh's last night, and there were so many of your friends, that my sad news seemed like throwing a bomb into the room. You would have been flattered at the grief it occasioned; there were Mrs. Lockart, the Pepys's, Mrs. Buller, Lady Herries, Geo. Cambridge, the Abbé Nichols, Mrs. Carter, and some who scarce know you, who yet found they would be very unfashionable if they did not join in the concern for you and in your panegyric. Cambridge had received a letter too, but three days earlier in date. Mr. Pepys desired me to tell you that he had written to you a folio of news, but you never received it. However, I am sure I have not let you starve, unless you are curious about suits in chancery[2].

Not to torment you more with my fears, when I hope you are almost recovered, I will answer the rest of your letter. General O'Hara I have unluckily not met yet. He is so dispersed, and I am so confined in my resorts and so seldom dine from home, that I have not seen him, even at General Conway's. When I do, can you imagine that we shall not talk of you two—yes; and your accident, I am sure, will be the chief topic. As our *fleets* are to dethrone Catherine Petruchi*a*, O'Hara will probably not be sent to Siberia. Apropos to Catherine and Petruchi*o*. I supped with their representatives, Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, t'other night at Miss Farren's: the Hothams were there too, and

[2] Mr. Pepys was a Master in Chancery.

Mrs. Anderson, who treated the players with acting as many characters as ever they did, particularly Gunnilda and Lady Clackmannan. Mrs. Siddons is leaner, but looks well: she has played Jane Shore and Desdemona, and is to play in *The Gamester*; all the parts she will act this year. Kemble, they say, shone in *Othello*.

Mrs. Damer has been received at Elvas with all military honours, and a banquet, by order of Mello, formerly ambassador here. It was handsome in him, but must have distressed her, who is so void of ostentation and love of show.

Miss Boyle, who no more than Miss Pulteney[3] has let herself be snapped up by lovers of her fortune, is going to Italy for a year with Lord and Lady Malden[4].

I return to town to-morrow morning, with a faint hope of receiving another letter about your fall, and will reserve the rest of my paper for anything I may hear before noon on Tuesday. I will not peremptorily fix my days of writing to Tuesdays and Fridays, but write as you mend, or as I find matter; therefore do not suspect gout if I am not punctual; I am more likely, I think, to be intercalary than remiss. This morning has been as warm as if the day had been born at Pisa; and Cliveden, where I have been giving some orders, did not look ugly.

Berkeley Square, Monday, after dinner.

Good news, though not just what I want most—Mirabeau is dead; ay, miraculously; for it was of a putrid fever (that began in his heart). Dr. Price is dying also[5]—fortunate

[3] Henrietta Laura, daughter of Sir William Johnstone-Pulteney, Baronet, by Frances, daughter of Daniel Pulteney; m. (1794) Sir James Murray (afterwards Murray-Pulteney). She was created Baroness of Bath, 1792; Countess of Bath, 1803.

[4] George Capel-Coningsby (1758–1839), Viscount Malden; eldest son of fourth Earl of Essex, whom he succeeded in 1799. His wife was Sarah, widow of Edward Stephenson and daughter of Henry Bazett, of St. Helena.

[5] He died in April 1791.

omens for those who hope to die in their beds too. I think alike of such incendiaries, whose lessons tend to blood, whether their stilettos have taken place or not. That Mr. Berry with so much good nature and good sense should be staggered, I do not wonder. Nobody is more devoted to liberty than I am. It is therefore that I abhor the *National Assembly*, whose outrageous violence has given, I fear, a lasting wound to the cause; for anarchy is despotism in the hands of thousands. A lion attacks but when hungry or provoked; but who can live in a desert full of hyenas?—nobody but Mr. Bruce; and we have only his word for it. Here is started up another corsair; one Paine[6], from America, who has published an answer to Mr. Burke that deserves a putrid fever. His doctrines go to the extremity of levelling; and his style is so coarse, that you would think he means to degrade the language as much as the government: here is one of his delicate paragraphs:—'We do not want a king, or lords of the bedchamber, or lords of the kitchen, or lords of the necessary house.' This rhetoric, I suppose, was calculated for our *poissardes*.

Monday night.

I am come home early from the Bishop of London's for the chance of finding another letter from one of you. But, ah, you did not know my anxiety!—March 16th will be a blacker day in my almanac than October 10th. I hope after nineteen days, without reckoning the time this will be travelling to you, you would at this moment be capable of laughing at my alarm. Alas, it is no jest to me!

I learnt nothing new for you, but that Lord Stratnaven[7]

[6] Thomas Paine (1737–1809). The first part of his *Rights of Man* appeared on March 13, 1791.

[7] Lord Strathavon, eldest son of fourth Earl of Aboyne, whom he succeeded in 1794; m. Catherine,

was married this morning to Miss Cope—not at Gretna Green, for they have been asked in church. Adieu! you bid me have no more gout this year—pray do you have no more falls.

2789. To Joseph Cooper Walker.

Strawberry Hill, April 4, 1791.

I have received the copy of my tragedy [1], and am exceedingly obliged to you, Sir, for the care with which you have been so good as to see it printed—but allow me to say, that I wish you had added another mark of kindness and prevented the editors from making me compliments to which I am so very ill entitled. To any *eminence in literature* I am sure I have no pretensions; *an amiable character* I wish I deserved; and of *high rank* I certainly am not, nor even aspired above being a private commoner, and have proved a very insignificant one. In short, Sir, I am ashamed at reading such things said of myself, and should be miserable if it could be supposed that I was aware of any such intention. I assure you I should have been more averse to their being inserted, than I was even to the publication of the play.

The text is surprisingly correct. I have found some very immaterial errors, or rather only literal alterations (probably from some MS. copy), and one alone that affects the sense, and that not in the piece, but in the postscript, where in p. 98, line 11, *terror* is printed for *horror*. I will just specify the rest, though of no consequence. In p. 5, line the 6th should have been printed thus,

second daughter of Sir Charles Cope, second Baronet, of Bruern, Oxfordshire.

Letter 2789.—Not in C.; now first printed from photograph of original in possession of Mr. John Boyd Thacher, Albany, N.Y.

[1] *The Mysterious Mother.*

It knows not wherefore. What a kind of being
Is circumstance!

there the pause should be; and then

I am a soldier, &c.

In p. 10, line 11, Oh! he has play'd me, &c., dele *how*; p. 12, line 2, for *the* staff, read *this*; p. 15, last line but two, after *tool*, dele the comma; p. 81, for effi*cacy* lost, read efficacy'*s* lost; p. 82, for pulse reply not, read repl*ies* not; p. 94, for fellow being, read fellow beings; p. 97, for but I *am* willing to insinuate, read I *was* willing, &c.

Now, Sir, I should blush to mention such very trifling inaccuracies, if I did not think it a just return for your trouble of overlooking the press, to prove to you that even the jealous eye of an author could discover no more, and no more material slips. Consequently I must again thank you, though again lament the advertisement from the publishers, of which I hope you will always bear me witness I was perfectly ignorant and innocent. For every other attention I shall always be, Sir,

Your much obliged and obedient humble servant,

Hor. Walpole.

P.S. Your health, Sir, I hope, is recovered and restored—on reading your letter again, I observe that your indisposition prevented your seeing the unlucky preface that gives me so much concern; and the only word in the whole publication that hurts the sense, by your not overlooking the postscript.

N. In my original, in the second line of the first scene, was *chill*, not *dull*, as *chilling* is more productive of fear than *dulling* is.

2790. To the Earl of Buchan.

My Lord, Berkeley Square, April 7, 1791.

I am very glad your Lordship has received a picture that gives you so much pleasure. Of James II I know no portrait. Of Lady Arabella Stuart there is a small whole-length at Welbeck, of which I have a copy by Vertue, and which (the copy) is actually in the engraver's hands for Mr. Lodge's[1] Collection of State Papers from the MSS. of the Howard and Talbot families, which Mr. Lodge discovered in the Heralds' Office deposited there by Henry Duke of Norfolk[2]; but neglected there and buried in dust. This publication in three volumes quarto will appear, I believe, in about a month, and is one of the most curious and valuable collections that has yet appeared; for though it will discover no new historic fact, it is most circumstantial on the treatment of the Queen of Scots during a great part of her imprisonment, with many other singular particulars.

As your Lordship is so good as to inquire after my health, on which I certainly should not otherwise have troubled you, I can only say that I have been very ill for above three months with one of the severest fits of the gout [I] ever suffered, but am recovered better than at my age I had any reason to expect. I have the honour to be, with great respect,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,
Hor. Walpole.

Letter 2790.—Not in C.; now first printed from original in possession of Messrs. Langham & Co.

[1] Edmund Lodge (1756–1839), at this time Blue Mantle Pursuivant at Arms.

[2] Henry Howard (1628–1684), sixth Duke of Norfolk.

2791. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, April 10, 1791.

It is Sunday, but no letter come! I did hope for one yesterday, as the preceding Saturday had brought me the miserable news of your fall, and this I flattered myself would make me amends by a favourable account—but Saturday I see is one of the *Dies nefastos carbone notandos*, and a pupil of *March 16th*. If to-morrow brings good news, I will prefer Mondays, though two days later. I have little news for you, though I begin writing to-day. If anybody asks me for news, I answer, 'Yes, and very bad; Miss Berry has had a terrible fall, and cut her beautiful nose!'

What novelties there are I will dispatch, for if I have not a most prosperous account to-morrow, I shall forget anything I have heard—at present my gazette would lie in a nutshell; and were it not for the oddity of what happened to myself for two days together, my intelligence would be like to the common articles of a newspaper. On Wednesday my nephew, Lord Cholmondeley, came and acquainted me that he is going to be married to Lady Charlotte Bertie[1], who had accepted of him—'But,' says he, 'you will be so good as not to mention it yet, for I am now going to the Duchess of Ancaster to ask her consent'—which her Grace did not refuse.

The next day Captain Waldegrave came, and almost in the same words, the parties excepted, notified a match between his sister, Lady Elizabeth[2], and Lord Cardigan, 'But you must not mention it yet, for the Earl is only

Letter 2791.—Not in C.

[1] Lady Georgiana Charlotte Bertie (d. 1838), second daughter of third Duke of Ancaster; m. (April 25, 1791) fourth Earl (afterwards first Marquis) of Cholmondeley.

[2] Lady Elizabeth Waldegrave (d. 1823), eldest surviving daughter of third Earl Waldegrave; m. (April 18, 1791) fifth Earl of Cardigan.

now gone in to the King to ask his leave.' I did not know I was so proper a Cato to be trusted with love-tales. I doubt George Ch. and his new wife, and the mothers of both, are not delighted with the former match; and Brudenel[3] and his mother will be terribly disappointed with the latter, after the old Earl had lain fallow so long. I remember when he married his former wife[4], they both looked so antique, that I said, they may have grandchildren, but they certainly will have no children—now it seems his Lordship means to have a great-grandson. I was to have met the mother, Mrs. Cholmondeley, last Friday at Mrs. Buller's, but the latter turned a very small party into a ball, and I desired to be excused, for though I have married two wives at once, when many years older than Lord Cardigan, I did not choose to jig with Master Buller's friends the officers of the Guards.

I can tell Mr. Berry nothing more of our Russian war, but that it is most exceedingly unpopular, and that it is supposed Mr. Pitt will avoid it if he possibly can. You know I do not love Catherine Petruchia Slayczar, yet I have no opinion of our fleet dethroning her.

An odd adventure has happened. The Primate of Poland has been here, the King's brother. He bought some scientific toys at Merlin's, paid fifteen guineas for them in the shop, and was to pay as much more. Merlin pretends he knew him only for a foreigner who was going away in two days, and literally had his holy highness arrested and carried to a sponging-house; for which the Chancellor has struck the attorney off the list. But hear the second part. The King of Poland had desired the Primate to send him some English books, who for one sent the *Law of Arrests*. The King wrote, 'This is not so useless a book

[3] Robert Brudenell, nephew and heir presumptive of Lord Cardigan.

[4] Anne Legge, sister of second Earl of Dartmouth; d. 1786.

to me as some might think; for when I was in England, I was arrested'—before the letter arrived, the Archbishop himself was in limbo.

Monday.

Last night I was at Mr. Pepys's, where was Lady Juliana Penn, who alarmed me exceedingly, for she had received a letter from her son in Italy, when I had had none—but this morning I have received a comfortable one, which I hope is perfectly true—for you must forgive me, if I cannot help fearing your kindness for me softens your accident and its consequences. You did not sleep for some nights, your nerves were shaken, and the friar's balsam was not taken off. I know that from the 25th of March to the 11th of April is above a fortnight, and yet I shall think it above a fortnight to this day sevennight, when I hope for a still better account; for though a little easier, I am far from satisfied—and not yet at all arrived at grieving for a mark on your nose, as I shall do till I actually see you, when the joy of your return will drown less considerations. How good you are to reassure me on that subject! The Abbé has come in and distracted me with news for which I do not care a straw, nor would have listened to, but that you like my telling you all I hear—but what are all those marriages to me who am separated from both my wives? or Miss Bingham's no-marriage with Lord Grey [5], for which Lord Stamford has forbid the banns? or the Marquis of Worcester's [6] with Lord Stafford's daughter, Lady M. M. or N. N. Leveson, which is declared? or the Duchess of Rutland's with Lord Paget, forbidden too by his father, yet to be or not to be—something. Madame du

[5] George Harry Grey (1765–1845), Lord Grey, eldest son of fifth Earl of Stamford, whom he succeeded in 1819.

[6] Henry Charles Somerset (1766–1835), Marquis of Worcester, eldest son of fifth Duke of Beaufort, whom he succeeded in 1803; m. (May 16, 1791) Lady Charlotte Sophia Leveson-Gower, daughter of first Marquis of Stafford.

Barry is again come, and Lady St. Asaph[7] died yesterday of a second miscarriage, leaving four young children, a most fond husband, and the families on both sides much afflicted. So much for the Abbé's Morning Herald, and I return to your nose and your nerves—how could you write so much, when they are not well—and to be thinking of my gout, and recommending care of myself—I am perfectly recovered of everything but your fall.

I had a letter two days ago from Mrs. Damer—then at Grenada; she had suffered from the snow on the mountains. Her parents have been in town these two months, and very well. I supped there last night with the Duchess of Richmond and Mrs. *Pompoustown* Hervey.

Your acquaintance Mrs. Horace Churchill, one of my seventy and I don't know how many nephews and nieces, has just presented me with one more of the first gender: Madame de St. Alban gave me two of the other—but perhaps might as justly have bestowed them on somebody not so rich in nepotism.

I must have an attestation under the hand of Agnes *aux joues de rose* that you have no fever left, that your nerves are rebraced, and I will bear an oath from any rival that your nose is as perfect as ever.

Your letter of this morning is an answer to mine of Feb. 28, to Florence—how vexatious such a distant correspondence! If I to-day say 'How do you do?' it will be one- or two-and-forty days before you answer, 'Very well thank you!'

Monday night.

I am just come from Lady Herries, who with Mrs. Hunter[8] charged me to tell you how glad they are to hear you are

[7] Lady Sophia Thynne, third daughter of first Marquis of Bath, and wife of George Ashburnham, Viscount St. Asaph, eldest son of second Earl of Ashburnham.

[8] Anne (1742–1821), daughter of Robert Home, and wife of John Hunter the surgeon. She gave lite-

better of your fall. I said you had just desired me to thank all who are so kind as to inquire after you: I wish I could answer their inquiries oftener!

You will, I trust, be at Florence when you receive this, but it will be May before I know so, which is sad, as it will be a better proof than all you can say, that your face is recovered. I shall apply what was said to one of the sable Finches, 'Sir, if you was to swear till you are white in the face,' &c.—that is, I must have collateral proofs, for my fears are stronger than my faith. Adieu! may Heaven preserve you both! and may I have no more days to stigmatize in my almanac!

2792. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Friday night, April 15, 1791.

My preface will be short; for I have nothing to tell, and a great deal that I am waiting most impatiently to hear; all which, however, may be couched in these two phrases,—'I am quite recovered of my fall, and my nose will not be the worse for it'—for with all my pretences, I cannot help having that *nose* a little upon my spirits; though if it were flat, I should love it as much as ever, for the sake of the head and heart that belong to it.

Poor lovely nose! I don't know what business you had to carry it to the mouth of the Arno and throw it down a precipice. I go to Strawberry to-morrow, in this jubilee spring that comes but once in fifty years, and shall return on Monday, trusting to be met by a letter from Pisa, with a prosperous account of all I wot of.

I have seen O'Hara with his face as ruddy and black, and his teeth as white as ever; and as fond of you two, and as

rary parties, and was something of a poetess. She was the authoress of the words of Haydn's song, 'My mother bids me bind my hair.'

grieved for your fall as anybody—but I. He has got a better regiment[1].

Strawberry Hill, Sunday night, past eleven.

You chose your time ill for going abroad this year; England never saw such a spring since it was fifteen years old. The warmth, blossoms, and verdure are unparalleled. I am just come from Richmond, having first called on Lady Di, who is designing and painting pictures for prints to Dryden's *Fables*. Oh, she has done two most beautiful: one, of Emily walking in the garden, and Palamon seeing her from the tower; the other, a noble, free composition of Theseus parting the rivals, when fighting in the wood. They are not, as you will imagine, at all like the pictures in the Shakespeare Gallery; no, *they* are worthy of Dryden.

I then went and played at loto with the French colony in Petty France, and to-morrow I am to have a most favourable account from Pisa, am I not?

I can tell you nothing at all certain of our war with Russia. If one believes the weather-glass of the stocks, it will be peace: they had fallen to 71, and are risen again, and soberly, to 79. Fawkener, Clerk of the Council, sets out to-day or to-morrow for Berlin; probably, I hope, with an excuse. In the present case, I had much rather our ministers were bullies than heroes: no mortal likes the war. The court majority lost thirteen of its former number at the beginning of the week, which put the opposition into spirits; but, pursuing their motions on Friday, twelve of the thirteen were recovered. Lord Onslow told me just now, at Madame de Boufflers's, that Lady Salisbury was brought to bed of a son and heir[2] last night, two hours after she came from the Opera; and that Madame du Barry dined yesterday with the Prince of Wales, at the Duke of

Letter 2792.—[1] He had become colonel of the 74th Highlanders.

[2] James Brownlow William Cecil (afterwards Gascoyne-Cecil), Viscount Cranborne. He succeeded as second Marquis of Salisbury in 1823.

Queensberry's, at Richmond. Thus you have all my news, such as it is; and I flatter myself no English at Pisa or Florence can boast of better intelligence than you—but for you, should I care about Madame du Barry or my Lady Salisbury, or which of them lies in or lies out?

Berkeley Square, Monday, April 18.

Oh, what a dear letter have I found, and from both at once; and with such a delightful bulletin of the nose's wound, which I trust is all the remainder of the fall. I have but one doubt, and that is from the delay of going to Florence, which I hope is to be placed only to the article of unbecoming.

I should not be pleased with the idleness of the pencil, were it not owing to the chapter of health, which I prefer to everything, high as I hold the 'Death of Wolsey.' The moment I enter Strawberry, I hasten into the little parlour, which I have new hung for his reception with Lady Di's gipsies and Mrs. Damer's dogs. I defy your favourite Italy to produce three such monuments of female genius. You order me to be particular about my own health: I have nothing to say about it, but that it is as good as before my last fit. Can I expect or desire more at my age? My ambition is to pass a summer, with you two established at Cliveden. I shall not reject more if they come; but one must not be presumptuous at seventy-three; and though my eyes, ears, teeth, and motion have still lasted to make life comfortable, I do not know that I should be enchanted if surviving any of them; and, having no desire to become a philosopher, I had rather be naturally cheerful than affectedly so: for patience I take to be only a resolution of holding one's tongue, and not complaining of what one feels—for does one feel or think the less for not owning it?

Though London increases every day, and that Mr.

Herschel has just discovered a new square or circus somewhere by the New Road in the Via Lactea, where the cows used to be fed, I believe you will think the town cannot hold all its inhabitants; so prodigiously the population is augmented. I have twice been going to stop my coach in Piccadilly (and the same has happened to Lady Aylesbury), thinking there was a mob; and it was only nymphs and swains sauntering or trudging. T'other morning, i. e. at two o'clock, I went to see Mrs. Garrick and Miss H. More at the Adelphi, and was stopped five times before I reached Northumberland House; for the tides of coaches, chariots, curricles, phaetons, &c., are endless. Indeed, the town is so extended, that the breed of chairs is almost lost; for Hercules and Atlas could not carry anybody from one end of this enormous capital to the other. How magnified would be the error of the young woman at St. Helena, who, some years ago, said to a captain of an Indiaman, 'I suppose London is very empty, when the India ships come out.' Don't make me excuses, then, for short letters; nor trouble yourself a moment to lengthen them. You compare little towns to quiet times, which do not feed history; and most justly. If the vagaries of London can be comprised once a week in three or four pages of small quarto paper, and not always that, how should little Pisa, except when a certain nose is at stake, furnish an equal export? When Pisa was at war with the rival republic of Milan, Machiavel was put to it to describe a battle, the slaughter in which amounted to one man slain; and he was trampled to death, by being thrown down and battered in his husk of complete armour; as I remember reading above fifty years ago at Florence.

Eleven at night.

Oh, mercy! I am just come from Mrs. Buller's, having left a very pleasant set at Lady Herries's—and for such

a collection! Eight or ten women and girls, not one of whom I knew by sight; a German count, as stiff and upright as the inflexible Dowager of Beaufort; a fat Dean and his wife, he speaking Cornish, and of having dined to-day at Lambeth; four young officers, friends of the boy Buller, who played with one of them at tric-trac, while the others made with the Misses a still more noisy commerce; and not a creature but Mrs. Cholmondely, who went away immediately, and her son, who was speechless with the headache, that I was the least acquainted with: and, to add to my sufferings, the Count would talk to me of *les beaux arts*, of which he knows no more than an oyster. At last came in Mrs. Blair, whom I know as little; but she asked so kindly after you two, and was so anxious about your fall and your return, that I grew quite fond of her, and beg you would love her for my sake, as I do for yours. Good night!

I have this moment received a card from the Duchess Dowager of Ancaster, to summon me for to-morrow at three o'clock—I suppose to sign Lord Cholmondeley's marriage articles with her daughter. The wedding is to be this day sevennight. Save me, my old stars, from wedding-dinners! But I trust they are not of this age. I should sooner expect Hymen to jump out of a curricle, and walk into the Duchess's dressing-room in boots and a dirty shirt.

2793. To Miss Mary Berry.

Strawberry Hill, April 23, 1791.

To-day, when the town is staring at the sudden resignation of the Duke of Leeds[1], asking the reason, and gaping to know who will succeed him, I am come hither with an indifference that might pass for philosophy; as the true

Letter 2793.—[1] Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

cause is not known, which it seldom is. Don't tell Europe; but I really am come to look at the repairs of Cliveden, and how they go on; not without an eye to the lilacs and the apple-blossoms: for even *self* can find a corner to wriggle into, though friendship may fit out the vessel. Mr. Berry may, perhaps, wish I had more political curiosity; but as I must return to town on Monday for Lord Cholmondeley's wedding, I may hear before the departure of the post if the seals are given: for the Duke's reasons, should they be assigned, shall one be certain? His intention was not even whispered till Wednesday evening. The news from India, so long expected, are not *couleur de rose*, but *de sang*: a detachment has been defeated by Tippoo Saib, and Lord Cornwallis is gone to take the command of the army himself. Will the east be more propitious to him than the west?

The abolition of the slave trade has been rejected by the House of Commons, though Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox united earnestly to carry it: but commerce chinked its purse, and that sound is generally prevalent with the majority; and humanity's tears, and eloquence's figures and arguments, had no more effect than on those patrons of liberty, the National Assembly in France; who, while they proclaim the rights of men, did not choose to admit the sable moiety of mankind to a participation of those benefits.

Captain Bowen has published a little pamphlet of affidavits, which prove that Gunnilda attempted to bribe her father's groom to perjure himself; but he begged to be excused. Nothing more appears against the mother, but that Miss pretended her mamma had an aversion to Lord Lorn (an aversion to a Marquis!), and that she did not dare to acquaint so tender a parent with her lasting passion for him. Still I am persuaded that both the mother and the aunt were in the plot, whatever it was.

I saw Lady Cecilia last night, and made all your speeches, and received their value in return for you.

Good Hannah More is killing herself by a new fit of benevolence, about a young girl with a great fortune, who has been taken from school at Bristol to Gretna Green, and cannot be discovered; nor the apothecary who stole her. Mrs. Garrick, who suspects, as I do, that Miss Europa is not very angry with Mr. Jupiter, had very warm words, a few nights ago, at the Bishop of London's, with Lady Beaumont; but I diverted the quarrel by starting the stale story of the Gunning. You know Lady B.'s eagerness; she is ready to hang the apothecary with her own hands; and he certainly is criminal enough. Poor Hannah lives with attorneys and Sir Sampson Wright; and I have seen her but once since she came to town. Her ungrateful *protégée*, the milkwoman, has published her tragedy, and dedicated it to a patron as worthy as herself, the Earl-bishop of Derry.

Monday, in the Square.

I have found a letter from you as I expected, but there were three pages before I found a word of your nose. You give a good account of it—yet, as you have again deferred your journey to Florence, though but for a day or two, I do not quite trust to your deposition. Produce your nose to kings and emperors or I shall not be satisfied. I know you are not eager for puppet-shows; yet your being at a *fête* would convince me more than the attestation of a surgeon.

You kindly desire me not to go to Strawberry for fear of relapse—but this is the case of so distant a correspondence! I have been there four or five times without the smallest inconvenience: besides, it has been summer all winter. You desire me too to continue to write punctually. I do not seem to be in danger of relaxing—at least, not before

I am settled in the country; and then indeed I may want matter—but the town goes so late out of itself, that I dare to say it will furnish me with something or other for these two months; and then in two months more I trust you will be on the road—and then—why then, in two months more I hope I shall have no occasion to write to you! Six months of your absence are nearly gone, and I am trying as much as I can to anticipate the other six!

At night.

Well! our wedding is over very properly, though with little ceremony; for the men were in frocks and white waistcoats; most of the women in white, and no diamonds but on the Duke's[2] wife; and nothing of ancient fashion but two bride-maids. The endowing purse[3], I believe, has been left off, ever since broad pieces[4] were called in and melted down. We were but eighteen persons in all, chiefly near relations of each side; and of each side a friend or two: of the first sort, the Greatheds. Sir Peter Burrell gave away the bride. The poor Duchess-mother wept excessively: she is now left quite alone; her two daughters married, and her other children dead—she herself, I fear, in a very dangerous way. She goes directly to Spa, where the new-married are to meet her. We all separated in an hour and a half. The Elliot girl[5] was there, and is pretty: she rolls in the numerous list of my nephews and nieces. Mrs. Horace Churchill has just given me another of the former, and Mrs. Geo. Cholmondely is bringing another of one sort or other, and

[2] The Duke of Ancaster.

[3] A purse, containing a sum of money, was formerly hung upon the bride's wrist by the bridegroom as he said the words 'with all my worldly goods I thee endow.'

[4] The hammered gold coins in use before the guinea was issued (1662). Their value was about twenty-four shillings. Broad pieces were called in in 1733.

[5] Georgiana Frederica Augusta Seymour, natural daughter of Lord Cholmondeley by Madame de St. Alban (Mrs. Elliot). She was brought up in his family, and married in 1808 Lord William Charles Augustus Bentinck, third son of third Duke of Portland.

could not be at the wedding to-night, no more than his father and mother, who, to my surprise, were not invited.

I am now told that our Indian skirmish was a victory, and that Tippoo Saib, and all his cavalry and elephants, ran away; but sure I am, that the first impression made on [me] by those who spread the news, was not triumphant; nor can I enjoy success, if it was success, in that country, which we have so abominably usurped and plundered.

You must wait for a new Secretary of State till next post. The Duke of Leeds is said to have resigned from bad health. The Ducs de Richelieu[6] and De Pienne, and Madame de St. Priest, are arrived here. Mr. Fawkener does not go to Berlin till Wednesday: still the stocks do not believe in the war.

I have exhausted my gazette; and this being both Easter and Newmarket week, I may possibly have nothing to tell you by to-morrow sennight's post, and may wait till Friday sennight: of which I give you notice, lest you should think I have had a fall, and hurt my nose; which I know gives one's friends a dreadful alarm. Good night!

P.S. I never saw such a blotted letter: I don't know how you will read it. I am so earnest when writing to you two, that I omit half the words, and write too small; but I will try to mend.

2794. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, Monday noon, April 25, 1791.

You flew away, Madam, without clapping your wings or giving the least notice; and by your ordering me to send you news, it looks as if you were taking roost—I hope, not yet. I did perch on my opening lilacs on Saturday, but

[6] Ferdinand Emmanuel du Plessis (1766–1822), Duc de Richelieu.

was obliged to return just now for my nephew Lord Cholmondeley's match *with the charming over the way*, which, I hear, is to be very fine in clothes and lace, Lady Ducie having revived that old-fashioned, and, I think, absurd, finery. It is to be this evening.

Easter and my absence makes me totally ignorant of news, but what I left last week, now a little stale; and I have seen nobody yet to refresh that little or much (for I know not which either of the articles imports, I mean the Indian news and the resignation of the Duke of Leeds). The first was dispersed as a defeat; but on Friday evening, like many defeats, was construed into a victory. Why the Duke retired, and whether he too is not to rally and have some other post, and who is to cross over and figure in with him, I cannot tell; two or three have been named—but it is as well not to know, as to send you falsehoods.

Last night I was at Richmond with the Birons and Boufflers. The young Duc de Richelieu, of a very different character from his grandfather and father, and consequently very amiable, is arrived, and the Duc de Pienne, and Madame de St. Priest and her husband[1] following. The horrors at Paris increase, and Mirabeau's death will probably let them widely loose; for his abilities being almost as great as his villainies, there seems to be nobody left with parts enough to control the rest. Anarchy must stride on, and people will find out that a dissolution of all government is not the best way of reforming even the worst. Crimes made some kind of government originally necessary; but, till now, nobody ever thought that giving the utmost latitude to all crimes was the surest mode of keeping mankind in order and happy; and yet, with that universal indulgence of the

LETTER 2794. —[1] François Emmanuel Guignard (1735–1821), Comte de St. Priest, who resigned the post of Minister of the Interior in Dec. 1790.

rights of men, the French prisons are twenty times fuller than ever they were—except of assassins and plunderers! It is my opinion that some of the National Assembly will, ere long, dislike being exposed to armies of banditti, and not find their own eighteen livres a day perfectly secure; yet I shall not wonder if Mirabeau's rapid wealth should encourage other beggarly innovators. Adieu! Madam, but I hope not for long, and that you will return.

2795. To the Countess of Upper Ossory.

Berkeley Square, April 30, 1791.

I thank your Ladyship for your felicitation on my nephew's marriage. It is certainly a proper one, and suitable enough in age, rank, fortune, and good nature; but it was far from a fine or ceremonious wedding. We were but eighteen persons present; nobody but the reigning Duchess of Ancaster had a diamond; and, except myself (who had an inkling of silver in my waistcoat, though since my abandoning courts and public places I have left off gold and silver), the men were so undressed, that had they been dirty too, they might have gone afterwards to the largest assembly in town: not so my Lord Cardigan's wedding, for which the King and Queen made new clothes—an honour unprecedented, at least for two centuries. King James I, perhaps, was very fine at the marriage of some of his buffoons.

The uproar is begun at Paris, and everybody that can is leaving it. Three or four of their *late* Dukes are arrived, and La Fayette is expected[1]. The Duke of Orléans gains ground, for he has some money left; but having neither character nor courage, it shows how little exists of either. Mobs can destroy a government for a time, but it requires

Letter 2795.—[1] He did not leave France.

the greatest talents and the greatest firmness—ay, and time too, to recompose and establish one. The French might have had a good government, if the National Assembly had had sense, experience, moderation, and integrity; but wanting all, they have given a lasting wound to liberty. They have acted, as that nation has always done, from the fashion of the hour, and with their innate qualities, cruelty and insolence: and when this hurricane is blown over, the anarchy of France will always be quoted as worse than despotism; and it should be remembered that an attempt to suppress general prejudices by violence and a total change does but inflame and root those prejudices more deeply in the sufferers. What hundred thousands of lives did *the Reformation* cost? And was it general at last? What feeling man would have been Luther if he could have foreseen the blood he should occasion to be spilt? For Calvin, he was a monster. His opposing the Papacy, and burning Servetus, proved him as bad, if not worse, than any of the popes. How different are English and French! How temperate are the Americans! How unlike the villain Mirabeau to Washington! How odious is a reformer who acts from ambition or interest!—and what are moments of gratified ambition or interest to endless obloquy!

Our constitution proves that no good government can be formed at once, or at once reformed; and reason, without experience, would tell one the same, for nature does not produce at the same period a number of great men enough to comprehend all the abuses that ought to be corrected in any system, and at the same time to foresee the greater evils that would arise from various alterations; for good and evil are so intermixed in human affairs in a series of ages, that it would require the omnipotent hand of the Creator to separate the bran from the chaff; and since He has permitted the intermixture, and not revealed His secret,

it becomes us, though bound to aim at the amendment of abuses, to proceed with diffidence and a timid hand. A presumptuous Alexander may cut a Gordian knot with his sword; and I wish it had never been worse occupied—but perhaps the poor knot hurt nothing but *his* pride; and to be sure his time would have been better employed in continuing to try to unravel it than in drawing his sword on any other occasion.

The Duke of Bedford does me a great deal too much honour, Madam; but I must believe that I am chiefly indebted to your Ladyship's partiality, who have mentioned me too favourably in his hearing. If one is spoken of by friends, it is certainly with omission of one's faults, weaknesses, and deficiencies; and then how is the person to whom one has been commended, disappointed! One does not answer to the idea conceived, and all the defects surprise: but seriously, Madam, how could I, approaching seventy-four, lame, dining alone at a strange hour, with a decaying memory, or remembering nothing but old tales, unacquainted with the present world, and conversing only or but seldom with any but the few old acquaintance I have left, be fit company for the Duke of Bedford? I know myself too well to clog his Grace's good nature and good breeding; and as I have never done anything that can make it worth curiosity's while to see me once even in my decrepitude, I am content to live in the Duke's good opinion only by the favourable opinion your Ladyship has given him of me. The poor cross at Ampthill is very like me: it was small at first, a breath of wind has blown most of it away, only enough remains to preserve my name a little longer, and then the grass will cover us both.

2796. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, May 4, 1791.

Though I have changed my post-days to Fridays, as better market days for news, the first-fruits do not answer—indeed, on Tuesday I should not have had a paragraph to send you; and now my articles will rather be talkables than events, for I know not one that has happened, except the change of weather, January having succeeded to April—but what signifies how the weather was, when you hear it three weeks afterwards?

Nothing more is known of the Russian war, or the new Secretary of State, nor why the last resigned. The Duke of York is gone to Berlin, and the press continues alert. That looks all martial—but the stocks are philosophic and keep their temper. The Prince of Wales is much [out] of order, spits blood, and fainted away after his levee on Monday.

General Conway has had a great escape; he was reviewing his Blues on Friday, previous to their being reviewed yesterday by the King. The ground was so slippery, for we have had much rain, that his horse fell down and rolled over him, and he only had his arm and leg much bruised; yet so much bruised, that yesterday he was forced to write to the King to excuse his appearance, and last night he was lamer than I am.

Mrs. Damer has written that we may expect her by the 10th. I shall allow two or three days for disappointments.

Here is arrived the pinchbeck Queen Dowager of England, *alias* the Countess of Albany. I have not much royal curiosity left—yet I have to see her, and it will be satisfied

Letter 2796.—Not in C.

—for as she is great-niece[1] to Lady Ailesbury, and cousin of the Duchess of Richmond, they must visit her, and they will make some assembly or private party for her. At present they say she is going to see Mrs. Swinburn in Yorkshire, who it seems is the friend of all sorts of queens.

We have received besides a packet of French Dukes, the late Gentilshommes de la Chambre, Richelieu, Villequier, and Duras[2]; the last narrowly escaped with his life at the late violence about the King's journey to St. Cloud; the first is returned to Paris at the King's own request. The National Assembly have added new persecution to the fugitives—or to their embassadors, forbidding these to receive those—but are the former obliged to remain embassadors?

You will have heard that La Fayette has resumed his command; which I think an ambitious weakness, and a second tome to Necker's return. A general who has lost command and authority over his troops will not recover it for long by imposing an oath on them. The Parisian mob are mounted to the highest note of the gamut of riot, and whoever plays to them in that key will make them caper away from their commander, or lead them against him.

I am sorry to say that we have discordant people amongst us, who are trying to strike up the same tune here. One

[1] The following table shows the connection between the Countess of Albany and the Countess of Ailesbury, and the Duchess of Richmond:—

Lady Elizabeth Seymour = Thomas Bruce, second Earl of Ailesbury. = Comtesse d'Esneux.

Charles Bruce, third Earl of Ailesbury, m. (third wife) Caroline Campbell.

Lady Charlotte Bruce, m. Prince de Hornes.

Lady Mary Bruce, m. third Duke of Richmond.

Elizabeth Philippina, m. Gustavus, Prince of Stolberg-Goedern.

Louisa, Countess of Albany, m. Prince Charles Edward Stuart.

[2] Emmanuel Céleste Augustin, Duc de Duras. He died in England in exile in 1800.

Paine, an American, has published the most seditious pamphlet ever seen but in open rebellion: thousands of copies of it have been dispersed; and the Revolution Clubs threaten farther hostilities. We have gained the happiest constitution upon earth by many storms; I trust we shall not lose it by one! nor change it for anarchy, which always ends in despotism, which I am persuaded will be the consequence of the intemperate proceedings in France, and in the end will be fatal to liberty in general; as mankind will dread buying even reformation too dear.

Apropos (an odd apropos, but you will see its descent), the Countess Stanhope t'other night inquired in the kindest and most interested manner after you both; so did Hannah More last night at *White Pussy's*.

Friday noon, 6th.

I must finish my letter, though my cargo is so small; regular stage-coaches, you know, set out, whether full or not. I have not sent you so short a gazette yet.

I hope to-morrow or Monday to hear that your nose has exhibited itself *openly* at Florence; and as certain cheeks have got natural roses, will not the pencil resume its practice? The Prince of Wales is better, and in a way to recover by an eruption. Adieu, all three!

2797. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, May 12, 1791.

A letter from Florence (that of April 20th) does satisfy me about your dear nose, till I can see it with my own eyes; but I will own to you now that my alarm at first went much farther. I dreaded lest so violent a fall upon rubbish might not have hurt your head; though all your letters since have proved how totally that escaped any damage.

Yet your great kindness in writing to me yourself so immediately did not tranquillize me, and only proved your good nature; then I had no high opinion of Italian surgeons —but I will not detail my departed fears, nor need I prove my attachment to you two. If you were really my wives, I could not be more generally applied to for accounts of you; of which I am proud. I should be ashamed if, at my age, it were a ridiculous attachment; but don't be sorry for having been circumstantial. My fears did not spring thence, nor did I suspect your not having told the whole—no! but I apprehended the accident might be worse than you knew yourself.

Poor Hugh Conway, though his life has long been safe, still suffers at times from his dreadful blow[1], and has not yet been able to come to town: nor would Lord Chatham's humanity put his ship into commission; which made him so unhappy, that poor Horatia, doting on him as she does, wrote to beg he might be employed; preferring her own misery in parting with him to what she saw him suffer. Amiable conduct! but, happily, her suit did not prevail.

I am not at all surprised at the private interviews between L.[2] and C. I am persuaded that the first must and will take more part than he has yet seemed to do, and so will others too; but as speculations are but guesses, I will say no more on the subject now; nor on your English and Irish travellers, none of whom I know. I have one general wish, that you may be amused while you stay by the natives of any nation; and I thank you a thousand times for confirming your intention of returning by the beginning of November; which I should not desire *coolly*, but from the earnest wish of putting you in possession of Cliveden while I live: which

LETTER 2797.—[1] He was accidentally struck on the head by the lead, when at sea in command of the *Canada* in 1790.

[2] The Emperor Leopold, then in Florence.

everybody would approve, at least, not wonder at (Mr. Batt, to whom I have communicated my intention, does extremely); and the rest would follow of course, as I had done the same for Mrs. Clive.

I smiled at your making excuses for your double letter. Do you think I would not give twelve pence to hear more of you and your proceedings, than a single sheet would contain?

The Prince is recovered: that is all the domestic news, except a most memorable debate last Friday in the House of Commons. Mr. Fox had most imprudently thrown out a panegyric on the French Revolution. His most considerable friends were much hurt, and protested to him against such sentiments. Burke went much farther, and vowed to attack those opinions. Great pains were taken to prevent such altercation, and the Prince of Wales is said to have written a dissuasive letter to Burke; but he was immovable; and on Friday, on the Quebec Bill[3], he broke out, and sounded a trumpet against the plot, which he denounced as carrying on here. Prodigious clamour and interruption arose from Mr. Fox's friends; but he, though still applauding the French, burst into tears and lamentations on the loss of Burke's friendship, and endeavoured to make atonement; but in vain, though Burke wept too. In short, it was the most affecting scene possible; and undoubtedly *an unique* one, for both the commanders were in earnest and *sincere.* Yesterday, a second act was expected; but mutual friends prevailed, that the contest should not be renewed: nay, on the same bill, Mr. Fox made a profession of his faith, and declared he would venture his life in support of the *present* constitution by King, Lords, and Commons. In short, I never knew a *wiser* dissertation, if the newspapers deliver it justly; and I think all the writers in England

[3] Relative to a new constitution for Canada.

cannot give more profound sense to Mr. Fox than he possesses. I know no more particulars, having seen nobody this morning yet.

I will deliver your message to Mr. P. Do you know he is not a little infected with (I mean no harm) the French dis-order? Mrs. Buller says: 'did you ever know P. start anything of his own?' I will not tell her or him what you say of his letter. But what shall I tell you else? We have expected Mrs. D. from last night; and perhaps she may arrive before this sets out to-morrow.

You know my infinity of nephews and nieces—I am always at a wedding or christening. Two nights ago I was godfather with Lord Chatham and Princess Sophia of Gloucester (represented by Miss Dee) to Horace Churchill's newborn son: it is christened *Chatham Horace* but is to be called by the latter—it could not, while young, be called *Chat, Chat*! Though all archdukes wear the Virgin's name first (with fifty others) nobody says, 'Come hither, Moll'—at least no mortal ever did, but the late Landgrave of Hesse, who had learned that vulgarism and used it about his wife, Princess Mary; when he spoke of her to her sisters Amalie and Caroline, who did not guess whom he meant.

Friday morning, May 13th.

Last night we were at Lady Fred. Campbell's—the usual cribbage party, Conways, Mount-Edgcumbes, Johnstones. At past ten Mrs. Damer was announced! Her parents ran down into the hall, and I scrambled down some of the stairs. She looks vastly well, was in great spirits, and not at all fatigued; though she came from Dover, had been twelve hours at sea from Calais, and had rested but four days at Paris from Madrid. We supped, and stayed till one o'clock; and I shall go to her as soon as I am dressed. Madrid and the Escurial, she owns, have gained her a

proselyte to painting, which her statuarism had totally engrossed—in her, no wonder. Of Titian she had no idea, nor have I a just one, though great faith, as at Venice all his works are now coal-black; but Rubens, she says, amazed her, and that in Spain he has even grace. Her father, yesterday morning, from pain remaining still in his shoulder from his fall, had it examined by Dr. Hunter; and a little bone of the collar was found to be broken, and he must wear his arm for some days in a sling.

Miss Boyle, I heard last night, had consented to marry Lord Henry Fitzgerald. I think they have both chosen well, but I have chosen better. Adieu! *Care spose!*

2798. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, Thursday, May 19, 1791.

Your letter of the 29th, for which you are so good as to make excuses on not sending it to the post in time, did arrive but two days later than usual; and as it is now two months from the 16th of March, and I have had so many certificates of the prosperous state of your pretty nose, I attributed the delay to the elements, and took no panic. But how kindly punctual you are, when you charge yourself with an irregularity of two days! and when your letters are so charmingly long, and interest me so much in all you do! But make no more excuses. I reproach myself with occasioning so much waste of your time, that you might employ every hour; for it is impossible to see all that the Medicis had collected or encouraged in the loveliest little city, and in such beautiful environs—nor had I forgotten the Cascines, the only spot containing English verdure.

Mrs. Damer is as well, if not better, than she has been a great while: her looks surprise everybody; to which, as

she is tanned, her Spanish complexion contributes. She and I called, the night before last, on your friend Mrs. Cholmeley; and they are to make me a visit to-morrow morning, by their own appointment. At Dover Mrs. Damer heard the Gunnings are there: here they are forgotten.

You are learning perspective, to take views: I am glad. Can one have too many resources in oneself? Internal armour is more necessary to your sex, than weapons to ours. You have neither professions, nor politics, nor ways of getting money, like men; in any of which, whether successful or not, they are employed. Scandal and cards you will both always hate and despise, as much as you do now; and though I shall not flatter Mary so much as to suppose she will ever equal the extraordinary talent of Agnes in painting, yet, as Mary, like the scriptural Martha, is occupied in many things, she is quite in the right to add the pencil to her other amusements.

I knew the Duchesse de Brissac a little, and but a little, in 1766. She was lively and seemed sensible, and had an excellent character. Poor M. de Nivernois! to be deprived of that only remaining child too!—but how many French one pities, and how many more one abhors! How dearly will even liberty be bought (if it shall prove to be obtained, which I neither think it *is* or will be) by every kind of injustice and violation of consciences! How little conscience can they have, who leave to others no option but between perjury and starving!

Mrs. Beckford I did not know; *Mrs.* Hare[1] I do: she is daughter of the late Bishop of St. Asaph, Shipley. She is extremely good-natured, has a wild kind of romantic

LETTER 2798.—[1] Georgiana Shipley, m. Francis Hare-Naylor (1753–1815), of Hurstmonceaux, Sussex. Great part of the family property had been sold to pay the debts of Mr. Hare-Naylor's step-mother. He remained in embarrassed circumstances till his death.

parts, and I have seen prettyish verses of hers. She married very indiscreetly, for though her swain was heir to a large estate, it was encumbered, to which load he added before he attained it, nor do I know that it is yet attained. He was said to have wit, and from his namesake[2], who has so very much, was in his county called the *Leveret*. If these are not the folk you wot of, no matter—if they are, keep my tale to yourselves, for whose use only I utter it. The Prince de Chimay I do not know.

After answering the articles of yours, I shall add what I can of new. After several weeks spent in search of precedents for trials ceasing or not on a dissolution of Parliament, the peers on Monday sat till three in the morning on the report; when the Chancellor and Lord Hawkesbury fought for the cessation, but were beaten by a large majority; which showed that Mr. Pitt has more weight (at present) in that House too, than—the diamonds of Bengal. Lord Hawkesbury protested. The trial recommences on Monday next, and has already cost the public fourteen thousand pounds; the accused, I suppose, much more.

The Countess of Albany is not only in England, in London, but at this very moment, I believe, in the palace of St. James's—not restored by as rapid a revolution as the French, but, as was observed last night at supper at Lady Mount-Edgcumbe's, by that topsy-turvy-hood that characterizes the present age. Within these two months the Pope has been burnt at Paris; Madame du Barry, mistress of Louis Quinze, has dined with the Lord Mayor of London, and the Pretender's widow is presented to the Queen of Great Britain! She is to be introduced by her great-grandfather's niece, the young Countess of Aylesbury[3]. That curiosity

[2] James Hare, the schoolfellow and friend of Fox and Fitzpatrick.

[3] Lady Anne Bawdon (d. 1813), third daughter of first Earl of Moira, and wife of first Earl of Ailesbury (of the second creation).

should bring her hither, I do not quite wonder—less, that she abhorred her husband; but methinks it is not very well-bred to his family, nor very sensible; but a new way of *passing eldest.* Apropos, I hear there is a medal struck at Rome of her brother-in-law, as Henry IX; which, as one of their Papal majesties was so abominably mean as to deny the royal title to the brother, though for Rome he had lost a crown, I did not know they allow *his* brother to assume. I should be much obliged to you if you could get me one of those medals in copper; ay, and one of his brother, if there was one with the royal title. I have the father's and mother's, and all the Popes', in copper; but *my* Pope, Benedict XIV, is the last, and therefore I should be glad of one of each of his successors, if you can procure and bring them with little trouble. I should not be sorry to have one of the present Gr. Duke[4] and his father; but they should be in copper, not only for my suite, but they are sharper than in silver.

Thursday night.

Well! I have had an exact account of the interview of the two Queens, from one who stood close to them. The Dowager was announced as Princess of Stolberg. She was well dressed, and not at all embarrassed. The King talked to her a good deal; but about her passage, the sea, and general topics: the Queen in the same way, but less. Then she stood between the Dukes of Gloucester and Clarence, and had a good deal of conversation with the former; who, perhaps, may have met her in Italy. Not a word between her and the Princesses: nor did I hear of the Prince; but he was there, and probably spoke to her. The Queen looked at her earnestly. To add to the singularity of the day, it is the Queen's Birthday. Another odd accident: at the

[4] Francis, son of the Emperor Leopold, whom he succeeded in 1792.

Opera at the Pantheon, Madame d'Albany was carried into the King's box, and sat there. It is not of a piece with her going to court, that she seals with the royal arms. I have been told to-night that you will not be able to get me a medal of the royal Cardinal, as very few were struck, and only for presents; so pray give yourself but little trouble about it.

Boswell has at last published his long-promised *Life of Dr. Johnson*, in two volumes in quarto. I will give you an account of it when I have gone through it. I have already perceived, that in writing the history of *Hudibras*, Ralpho has not forgot himself—nor will others, I believe, forget *him*!

Friday, one o'clock.

Your two friends have been here, and amongst other things I think we mentioned you two. Good morrow!

2799. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, May 26, 1791.

I am rich in letters from you: I received that by Lord Elgin's[1] courier first, as you expected, and its elder the next day. You tell me mine entertain you; *tant mieux.* It is my wish, but my wonder; for I live so very little in the world, that I do not know the present generation by sight: for, though I pass by them in the streets, the hats with valences, the folds above the chin of the ladies, and the dirty shirts and shaggy hair of the young men, who have *levelled nobility* almost as much as the *mobility* in France have, have confounded all individuality. Besides, if I did go to public places and assemblies, which my going to roost earlier prevents, the bats and owls do not begin

Letter 2799. — [1] Thomas Bruce (1766–1841), seventh Earl of Elgin, diplomatist.

to fly abroad till far in the night, when they begin to see and be seen. However, one of the empresses of fashion, the Duchess of Gordon, uses fifteen or sixteen hours of her four-and-twenty. I heard her journal of last Monday. She first went to Handel's music in the Abbey; she then clambered over the benches, and went to Hastings's trial in the Hall; after dinner, to the play; then to Lady Lucan's assembly; after that to Ranelagh, and returned to Mrs. Hobart's faro-table; gave a ball herself in the evening of that morning, into which she must have got a good way; and set out for Scotland the next day. Hercules could not have achieved a quarter of her labours in the same space of time. What will the Great Duke think of our Amazons, if he has letters opened, as the Emperor was wont! One of our Camillas[2], but in a freer style, I hear, he saw (I fancy, just before your arrival); and he must have wondered at the familiarity of the dame, and the nincompoophood of her Prince. Sir W. H. is arrived—his Nymph of the Attitudes[3] was too prudish to visit the rambling peeress.

Mrs. Cholmeley was so very good as to call on me again yesterday; Mr. French was with me, and fell in love with her understanding, and probably with her face too—but with that he did not trust me. He says we shall have Dr. Darwin's stupendous poem in a fortnight, of which you saw parts. Geo. Cholmondeley's wife, after a dreadful labour, is delivered of a dead child.

The rest of my letter must be literary; for we have no news. Boswell's book is gossiping; but, having numbers of proper names, would be more readable, at least by me, were it reduced from two volumes to one: but there are woful *longueurs*, both about his hero and himself, the

[2] Lady Craven.
[3] Emma Harte, married to Sir William Hamilton in Sept. 1791.

fidus Achates; about whom one has not the smallest curiosity. But I wrong the original Achates: one is satisfied with his fidelity in keeping his master's secrets and weaknesses, which modern led-captains betray for their patron's glory and to hurt their own enemies; which Boswell has done shamefully, particularly against Mrs. Piozzi, and Mrs. Montagu, and Bishop Percy. Dr. Blagden[4] says justly, that it is a new kind of libel, by which you may abuse anybody, by saying some dead person said so-and-so of somebody alive. Often, indeed, Johnson made the most brutal speeches to living persons; for though he was good-natured at bottom, he was very ill-natured at top. He loved to dispute to show his superiority. If his opponents were weak, he told them they were fools; if they vanquished him, he was scurrilous—to nobody more than to Boswell himself, who was contemptible for flattering him so grossly, and for enduring the coarse things he was continually vomiting on Boswell's own country, Scotland. I expected, amongst the excommunicated, to find myself, but am very gently treated. I never would be in the least acquainted with Johnson; or, as Boswell calls it, had not a just value for him; which the biographer imputes to my resentment for the Doctor's putting bad arguments (purposely, out of Jacobitism) into the speeches which he wrote fifty years ago for my father in the *Gentleman's Magazine*; which I did not read then, or ever knew Johnson wrote till Johnson died, nor have looked at since. Johnson's blind Toryism and known brutality kept me aloof; nor did I ever exchange a syllable with him: nay, I do not think I ever was in a room with him six times in my days. The first time I think was at the Royal Academy. Sir Joshua said, 'Let me present Dr. Goldsmith to you'; he did.

[4] Sir Charles Blagden (1748–1820), physician, well known in literary and scientific circles.

'Now I will present Dr. Johnson to you.' 'No,' said I, 'Sir Joshua, for Dr. Goldsmith, pass—but you shall *not* present Dr. Johnson to me.' Some time after Boswell came to me, said Dr. J. was writing the *Lives of the Poets*, and wished I would give him anecdotes of Mr. Gray. I said, very coldly, I had given what I knew to Mr. Mason. B. hummed and hawed, and then dropped, 'I suppose you know Dr. J. does not admire Mr. Gray.' Putting as much contempt as I could into my look and tone, I said, 'Dr. Johnson don't! —humph!'—and with that monosyllable ended our interview. After the Doctor's death, Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Boswell sent an ambling circular-letter to me, begging subscriptions for a monument for him—the two last, I think, impertinently; as they could not but know my opinion, and could not suppose I would contribute to a monument for one who had endeavoured, poor soul! to degrade my friend's superlative poetry. I would not deign to write an answer; but sent down word by my footman, as I would have done to parish officers with a brief, that I would not subscribe. In the two new volumes Johnson says, and very probably did, or is made to say, that Gray's poetry is *dull*, and that he was a *dull* man! The same oracle dislikes Prior, Swift, and Fielding. If an elephant could write a book, perhaps one that had read a great deal would say that an Arabian horse is a very clumsy, ungraceful animal. Pass to a better chapter!

Burke has published another pamphlet[5] against the French Revolution, in which he attacks it still more grievously. The beginning is very good; but it is not equal, nor quite so injudicious as parts of its predecessor; is far less brilliant, as well as much shorter: but, were it ever so long, his mind overflows with such a torrent of images, that he cannot be tedious. His invective against Rousseau is admirable, just,

[5] *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly.*

and new. Voltaire he passes almost contemptuously. I wish he had dissected Mirabeau too; and I grieve that he has omitted the violation of the consciences of the clergy, nor stigmatized those universal plunderers, the National Assembly, who gorge themselves with eighteen livres a day; which to many of them would, three years ago, have been astonishing opulence.

When you return I shall lend you three volumes in quarto of another work, with which you will be delighted. They are state letters in the reigns of Henry the Eighth, Mary, Elizabeth, and James; being the correspondence of the Talbot and Howard families, given by a Duke of Norfolk to the Heralds' Office; where they have lain for a century neglected, buried under dust, and unknown, till discovered by a Mr. Lodge, a genealogist, who, to gratify his passion, procured to be made a Pursuivant. Oh, how curious they are! Henry seizes an alderman who refused to contribute to a benevolence; sends him to the army on the Borders; orders him to be exposed in the front line; and if that does not do, to be treated with the utmost rigour of military discipline. His daughter Bess is not less a Tudor. The mean, unworthy treatment of the Queen of Scots is striking; and you will find how Elizabeth's jealousy of her crown and her avarice were at war, and how the more ignoble passion predominated. But the most amusing passage is one in a private letter, as it paints the awe of children for their parents a *little* differently from modern habitudes. Mr. Talbot, second son of the Earl of Shrewsbury, was a member of the House of Commons, and was married. He writes to the Earl his father, and tells him that a young woman of a very good character has been recommended to him for chambermaid to his wife, and if his Lordship does not disapprove of it, he will hire her. There are many letters of news, that are very enter-

taining too—but it is nine o'clock, and I must go to Lady Cecilia's.

Friday.

The Conways, Mrs. Damer, the Farrens, and Lord Mount-Edgcumbe supped at the Johnstones'. Lord Mount-Edgcumbe said excellently, that 'Mademoiselle D'Éon is her own widow.' I wish I had seen you both in your court-*plis*, at your presentation; but that is only one wish amongst a thousand.

East winds and blights have succeeded our April spring, as you guessed, but though I have been at Strawberry every week, I have caught no cold, I kindly thank you. Adieu!

2800. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, June 2, 1791.

To the tune of 'The Cow with the crumpledy Horn,' &c.

'This is the note that nobody wrote.

'This is the groom that carried the note that nobody wrote.

'This is Ma'am Gunning, who was so very cunning, to examine the groom that carried the note that nobody wrote.

'This is Ma'am Bowen, to whom it was owing, that Miss Minify Gunning was so very cunning, to examine the groom that carried the note that nobody wrote.

'These are the Marquises shy of the horn, who caused the maiden all for-Lorn, to become on a sudden so tattered and torn, that Miss Minify Gunning was so very cunning, to examine the groom, &c.

'These are the two Dukes, whose sharp rebukes made the two Marquises shy of the horn, and caused the maiden all for-Lorn, &c.

'This is the General somewhat too bold, whose head was so hot, though his heart was so cold; who proclaimed himself single before it was meet, and his wife and his daughter turned into the street, to please the two Dukes, whose sharp rebukes,' &c., &c., &c.

This is not at all new; I have heard it once or twice imperfectly, but could not get a copy till now; and I think it will divert you for a moment, though the heroines are as much forgotten as Boadicea; nor have I heard of them since their arrival at Dover.

Well! I have seen Madame d'Albany, who has not a ray of royalty about her. She has good eyes and teeth; but I think can have had no more beauty than remains, except youth. She is civil and easy, but German and ordinary. Lady Aylesbury made a small assemblage for her on Monday, and my curiosity is satisfied. Mr. Conway and Lady A., Lord and Lady Frederick Campbell, and Mrs. E. Hervey and Mrs. Hervey, breakfasted with me that morning at Strawberry, at the desire of the latter, who had never been there; and whose commendations were so promiscuous, that I saw she did not at all understand the style of the place. The day was north-easterly and cold, and wanting rain; and I was not sorry to return to town. I hope in five months to like staying there much better.

I have had no letter from you since Monday sennight, but as I had three almost at once, and as Mrs. Damer received one two days ago, I am in no fright about you; and indeed I do not like your sitting and writing so much, which is bad for you. All the difference now is, that I have nothing to answer; and having nothing to tell, this will be very brief.

Mrs. Damer, who returned in such Spanish health, has already caught an English north-eastern cold; with pains in all her limbs, and a little fever, and yesterday was not above

two hours out of bed. Her father came to me from her before dinner, and left her better; and I shall go to her presently; and, this not departing till to-morrow, I hope to give you a still more favourable account. These two days may boldly assume the name of June, without the courtesy of England. Such weather makes me wish myself at Strawberry, whither I shall betake myself on Saturday, for three days; but shall not be able to settle yet.

Next week I must go to Doctors' Commons—don't be alarmed—I have not heard a syllable against either of you; but a poor old gentlewoman in the country has made me her executor and trustee for her two daughters—and they need not alarm you neither—though somehow or other there was a connection between the families, which it is not proper to explain by the post, and I must repair into the City to prove the will. Some trouble I shall have, for there are disagreeable circumstances attending both daughters, who are not of the compos-ite order. Well! one must do the best one can, and make the best of everything. It is a chequered world, and surely I have no reason to complain of my lot in it!—a truly hard fate is that of two of the most amiable young women in the world, punished without a fault, and before they were capable of having a fault, not for the fault, but for the virtues of their father[1]! But justice is not only blind, as she ought to be, when sitting on the bench in her scarlet robe and furs, but when she is at home *en famille.*

Friday noon, 3rd.

I sat with Mrs. D. an hour last night, and found her much mended. She was quite alive, and her hand not near so hot

LETTER 2800.—[1] Robert Berry lost the favour of his uncle, Mr. Ferguson, by a refusal to comply with Mr. Ferguson's wish that he should marry again very shortly after the death of his wife (the mother of Mary and Agnes Berry). Mr. Ferguson transferred his favour, and finally his fortune, to Mr. Berry's younger brother.

as the preceding evening. To-day the message is, 'much better,' and if she proved so, she told me she would ask your friend Mrs. Cholmeley to meet me there this evening. My lawyer is just come about my executorship, and I must finish abruptly—Adieu!

P.S. Hastings made his defence yesterday, but the trial is put off till next session, as the Parliament is to be prorogued next week. Nothing decided about the Russian war, nor a Secretary of State yet, but Dundas, it is said, is to be the man.

2801. To Miss Mary Berry.

Berkeley Square, June 8, 1791.

Your No. 34, that was interrupted, and of which the last date was of May 24th, I received on the 6th, and if I could find a fault, it would be in the length; for I do not approve of your writing so much in such hot weather, for, be it known to you ladies, that from the first of the month, June is not more June at Florence. My hay is crumbling away; and I have ordered it to be cut, as a sure way of bringing rain.

I have a selfish reason, too, for remonstrating against long letters. I feel the season advancing when mine will be piteous short; for what can I tell you from Twickenham in the next three or four months? Scandal from Richmond and Hampton Court, or robberies at my own door? The latter, indeed, are blown already. I went to Strawberry on Saturday, to avoid the Birthday crowd and squibs and crackers. At six I drove to Lord Strafford's, where his goods are to be sold by auction; his sister, Lady Anne[1], intending to pull down the house and rebuild it. I returned a quarter before seven; and in the interim between my

Letter 2801.—[1] Lady Anne Conolly.

Gothic gate and Ashe's nursery, a gentleman and gentlewoman, in a one-horse chair and in the broad face of the sun, had been robbed by a single highwayman, *sans* mask. Ashe's mother and sister stood and saw it; but having no notion of a robbery at such an hour in the high-road, and before their men had left work, concluded it was an acquaintance of the robber's. I suppose Lady Cecilia will not descend from her bedchamber to the drawing-room without a Life-guard man. She quits her house at Hampton this autumn, her term ending then, and the proprietor asking seven thousand pounds for it, though valued by Christie but at fifteen hundred pounds.

The Duke of Bedford eclipsed the whole Birthday by his clothes, equipage, and servants: six of the latter walked on the sides of the coach to keep off the crowd—or to tempt it; for their liveries were worth an argosie. The Prince was gorgeous too: the latter is to give Madame d'Albany a dinner. She has been introduced to Mrs. Fitzherbert. You know I used to call Mrs. Cosway's concerts Charon's boat: now, methinks, London is so. I am glad Mrs. C.[2] is with you; she is pleasing—but surely it is odd to drop a child and her husband and country all in a breath!

I am glad you have had the comfort of Miss Craufurd, and are dis*franchised* of the exiles. We have several, I am told, here; but I strictly confine myself to those I knew formerly at Paris, and who all are quartered on Richmond Green. I went to them on Sunday evening, but found them gone to Lord Fitzwilliam's, the next house to Madame de Boufflers's, to hear his organ; whither I followed them, and returned with them. The Comtesse Émilie played on her harp; then we all united at loto. I went home at twelve, unrobbed; and Lord Fitzwilliam,

[2] Mrs. Cosway; she appears at one time to have left her husband and to have travelled in Italy with a singer named Marchesi.

who asked much after you both, was to set out the next morning for Dublin, though intending to stay there but four days, and be back in three weeks.

I am sorry you did not hear all Monsieur de Lally Tollendal's[3] tragedy, of which I have had a good account. I like his tribute to his father's memory. Of French politics you must be tired; and so am I. Nothing appears to me to promise their chaos duration; consequently I expect more chaos, the sediment of which is commonly despotism. Poland ought to make the French blush; but that they are not apt to do on any occasion. Let us return to Strawberry. The house of Sebright breakfasted there with me on Monday; the daughter had given me a drawing, and I owed her a civility. After dinner I returned to town, and went to Mrs. Damer, whom I found quite recovered and intending to go out the next day, as I conclude she did. She proposed to ask the Pepys's, Mrs. Cholmely, and Mrs. Buller to meet me on Friday evening, to which I willingly consented. More willingly than I should have applauded your dancing reels in sultry weather, though I have as much faith in your both dancing well, as in everything you both undertake. Thank you for reminding me of falls; in one sense I am more liable to them than when you left me, for I am sensibly much weaker since my last fit; but that weakness makes me move much slower, and depend more on assistance. In a word, there is no care I do not take of myself: my heart is set on installing you at Cliveden; and it will not be my fault if I do not preserve myself till then. If another summer is added, it will be happiness indeed; but I am not presumptuous, and count the days only till November. I am glad you, on your parts, repose till your journey commences, and go not into sultry crowded lodgings at the Ascension. I was

[3] Trophime Gérard (1751–1830), Marquis de Lally Tollendal, son of the celebrated Baron de Lally. His tragedy was entitled *Strafford*.

at Venice in summer, and thought airing on stinking ditches pestilential, after enjoying the delicious nights on the Ponte di Trinita at Florence, in a linen night-gown and a straw hat, with *improvisatori*, and music, and the coffee-houses open with ices—at least, such were the customs fifty years ago!

The Duke of St. Albans has cut down all the brave old trees at Hanworth, and consequently reduced his park to what it issued from—Hounslow Heath: nay, he has hired a meadow next to mine, for the benefit of embarkation; and there lie all the good old corpses of oaks, ashes, and chestnuts directly before *your* windows, and blocking up one of my views of the river! but so impetuous is the rage for building, that his Grace's timber will, I trust, not annoy us long. There will soon be one street from London to Brentford; ay, and from London to every village ten miles round! Lord Camden has just let ground at Kentish Town for building fourteen hundred houses—nor do I wonder; London is, I am certain, much fuller than ever I saw it. I have twice this spring been going to stop my coach in Piccadilly, to inquire what was the matter, thinking there was a mob—not at all; it was only passengers. Nor is there any complaint of depopulation from the country: Bath shoots out into new crescents, circuses, squares every year: Birmingham, Manchester, Hull, and Liverpool would serve any king in Europe for a capital, and would make the Empress of Russia's mouth water. Of the war with Catherine Slay-Czar I hear not a breath, and thence conjecture it is dozing into peace.

Mr. Dundas has kissed hands for Secretary of State; and Bishop Barrington, of Salisbury, is transferred to Durham, which he affected not to desire, having large estates by his wife[4] in the south—but from the triple mitre

[4] Anne, only daughter of Sir John Guise, fourth Baronet, of Mongewell in Wiltshire, and second wife of the Bishop.

downwards, it is almost always true, what I said some years ago, that *nolo episcopari* is Latin for *I lie.* Tell it not in Gath that I say so; for I am to dine to-morrow at the Bishop of London's at Fulham, with Hannah *Bonner*, my *imprimée.* This morning I went with Lysons the Reverend to see Dulwich College, founded in 1619 by Alleyn, a player, which I had never seen in my many days. We were received by a smart divine, *très bien poudré*, and with black satin breeches—but they are giving new wings and red satin breeches to the good old hostel too, and destroying a gallery with a very rich ceiling; and nothing will remain of ancient but the front, and an hundred mouldy portraits, among apostles, sibyls, and kings of England. On Sunday I shall settle at Strawberry; and then woe betide you on post-days! I cannot make news without straw. The Johnstones are going to Bath for the healths of both; so Richmond will be my only staple. Adieu, all three.

END OF VOL. XIV